Teachings 2010 to 2000 Eckhart-Tolle-Teaching Compilation Part 3 of 8

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 15:32)

Consciousness itself, primordial intelligence, and out of that arise forms, thought forms, and they become the conditioned form consciousness, and then thought forms become material forms. So we have thought, which are objects in consciousness, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, they are all objects because they become, you perceive, what you call a flower. It somehow, the image goes through your eyes, becomes a nerve impulse, whatever they say, then gets reconstructed in the brain, which nobody, the greatest doctor has no idea how it works, and then you get an image arises of a flower.

It's a thought form too, an object in consciousness, not conceptual thought, sense perception, conceptual thought. Objects in consciousness and consciousness. Most people walk around identified continuously with objects in consciousness.

They don't know themselves as the underlying space, space consciousness. Here we have another pointer, in case you didn't get the first one. In ultimate terms, objects in consciousness are things, because we are speaking of form.

So most people's lives consist of things that they are concerned with. Thoughts are things, material things, that comes first, and that's for a large part of the population of the planet. Their entire existence is consumed by concern with material things, and that applies both to the poor part of the world, and to the wealthy part of the world.

The poor are concerned with material things because they may not have enough to meet all the needs of the body, and the wealthy are concerned with material things because nothing is ever enough to the me. I need more. It's the unconscious movement of more.

So there's one level on which one's life, one's entire existence is concerned with things, objects. And then things in a wider sense are anything that arises in your mind as an object. Thought forms, experiences, knowledge.

One thing after another arises inside you. It's a burden to live in such a way, one's life being consumed by one damn thing after another. You know how life is.

It never leaves you alone. The next thing comes, and it demands your attention. It can be a thought that demands your attention.

It can be a phone call, which is also a thought. This is important. This is what's going on.

And when you've solved one thing, another one comes up from behind. So you may have noticed the world of things doesn't leave you alone. It always has something, always

some new thing comes up to demand your attention.

You're surrounded by things, and not only outside, unfortunately. And then you carry the accumulated content of thought forms inside you, which is object consciousness, we could say, and you are burdened with that. And this is how people live, how they at work, in families.

That continues one thing after another. What's the next thing we have to do? And another, another.

And when they're not concerned with things, they go into the hypnotic state of switching on some entertainment device. First consumed by things, and then finally click. What a life.

It's living in a room crammed full with things. You can't even move in it anymore. And then you step out of identification with thought forms.

How do you do that, says the thought form. Give me a technique, says another thought. Okay, there are seven steps.

That will take you seven years. Now if we did that here, this gathering would be more satisfying to the mind. Because you could go home and tell your family, when they ask you, what did you come away with, what did you learn?

And you could say, I learned seven steps, and it will take me seven years. Oh, that's great, you got your money's worth. And so it's satisfying to be given more time to the mind, because it has that need.

It loves it. And it's just waiting for something like that. And it's frustrating to the mind to be sitting here and saying, okay, yeah, but how?

We can say, renounce thought. We can say, renounce time. But even that is still maybe a little bit abstract.

To put it even more simply, we could say, renounce the next moment. Because you notice that most of your life, you're more interested in the next moment than in this one. It's a deeply conditioned movement.

Renounce that need for the next moment. The psychological need for, okay, what's next? And be completely with this.

What is now. Completely allowing this moment so precious. Not precious because it's fleeting, that's a superficial way of looking at the present moment.

Sometimes people say, this moment is so fleeting, just, you know, it'll be over soon. Just hang on to it and remember it, remember it. Take a photo of it.

No, it's not precious because of that. Because the present moment is not fleeting. The forms are fleeting that arise in the field of now.

Come and go. But when you enter the now with your attention, and don't take it too literally, it's just a pointer, when you enter the now with your attention, then you renounce the next moment. And a completely different quality of being arises when you become present to what is.

Instead of denying it, running away from it, making it a means to an end. And it is at that moment the mind falls away. And then you realize how vast the space is inside you, and how relatively insignificant anything in object consciousness is compared to the depth, the spaciousness within you.

The stillness. How relatively insignificant any thought that comes into your mind is. Relatively insignificant.

How relatively insignificant anything that happens or doesn't happen is. You see the relativity of whatever happens in the realm of object consciousness, in the realm of things. Okay, it's nicer perhaps to live in a beautiful place than to live in a beautiful mansion, than to live in a little hut or a little room on the surface.

Yes, it might be nicer. But if you have not found the dimension that is beyond object consciousness in yourself and live in a mansion, the mansion is not going to do that much for you. And if you have found it in the little room, whether you are in a little room or a mansion, it doesn't matter that much anymore.

Because there is such aliveness to the field of now, it doesn't really matter where you go, what the things are that surround you, they matter relatively but not absolutely. And then the universe around you is recognized as playful, forms that come and go, experiences, different places come and go. It's a bit like when you are rooted in the now, you are rooted in being, you are rooted in yourself.

And there is such fullness to now, it is the fullness of life itself, because before life becomes a thing, before life becomes an object, before life becomes a life form, there is life, consciousness, whatever word. And to know yourself as that is the ultimate liberation. What is liberation?

What are you liberated from? You are liberated from the world of things, from obsession, from being consumed by things, which includes thoughts. You are liberated from time, also as an obsession that you are consumed by.

And you are liberated from a very heavy sense of self, the me, what the Buddha called the self.

[Speaker 3] (15:34 - 15:36)

Ah, all that.

[Speaker 1] (15:45 - 2:02:32)

The key then, the little opening into what we might call space consciousness. This is not from science fiction. Space consciousness within yourself, the unconditioned consciousness.

How do I get from being consumed and identified with object consciousness to recognizing myself as space? Ah, it doesn't work by trying to run away from the world. It's through allowing whatever form this moment takes, the world of form, the world of objects, allowing whatever form this moment takes, internally allowing it to be as it is.

External forms, inner forms, thoughts, emotions, feelings, allow the suchness of this moment. No longer make the now into an enemy. The moment you allow what is to be, there is what one could call a sense of space around what is.

It could be an event that usually would trigger in you upset or impatience or anger. And you'd simply say yes to it because it is. And suddenly there's space around the event.

It's just a little pointer. And this is a beautiful thing to discover, the space around things. Why should I allow something to be?

Because it is. It already is the case. Yeah, but it shouldn't be happening.

But it is. At this moment, the mind says, nothing will ever change if I allow this moment to be as it is. The deeper truth is, if I internally am antagonistic towards this moment, ultimately nothing is ever going to change.

Because that is the old consciousness, which it keeps itself in place, the egoic consciousness, the mind-identified consciousness, the object-identified consciousness keeps itself in place through fighting what is, the me. How could one argue with the is-ness of this moment once you realize that the entire cosmos is connected, interconnected, everything in the cosmos is totally interconnected. Physicists know that.

So nothing that happens is isolated, an isolated event. It is connected with the totality. And within the totality, it makes sense.

In many, many cases, you could never work out through your understanding, mental understanding, how an event that on the surface looks senseless or looks as if it shouldn't be happening, you could never work out through intellectual understanding how the totality has brought this event about. Because no mind, no human mind, can even understand a fragment of the totality. It would be presumptuous to an absurd degree to believe that through the human mind you could understand the totality of the universe and then explain it through words, using five vowel sounds, A, I, E, O, U.

Five sounds are the basic sounds. And then there are the others. They are called consonants, I think.

They are sounds that are produced through air pressure, produced by shh, ff, chh. So you have the five vowel sounds plus a few noises produced through air pressure. And we believe that we could explain something, the universe.

So you see how useful it is to give up trying to understand. But what we can see, and this is confirmed not only by the ancient wisdom traditions of humanity, such as Buddhism, but also even through recent discoveries in molecular atomic physics, is the interconnectedness of all things. That we can know.

Yes, we don't know how. We can't understand how, in what way. But we can see, yes, it all is ultimately one.

The universe is one. It is one both at the unmanifested level, the primordial one, the unconditioned one, the unborn, as the Buddha called it, the unborn, the uncreated, the unmanifested. Beautiful saying of the Buddha.

He said, there is amongst, that's how the translation goes, there is amongst the uncreated, the unborn, the unmanifested. If there were not the uncreated, the unborn, the unmanifested, there would be no escape from the born, the created, the manifested. So, yes, we can see, the universe is one, both as the unmanifested, obviously, and it is one as an organism, even in the manifested realm.

It is one organism, which has many different cells to it. One cell in the organism is humanity. Humanity also is one organism.

And what humans are doing to each other is a diseased organism in many ways. So the universe is one organism. Whatever happens has its place within the totality, even if it seems completely incomprehensible.

And many things do happen. Why is this happening? And just to simply see what one could call the inevitability of what is within the context, the larger context of the whole, to see the inevitability of whatever form this moment takes in your life, whatever happens, could not be otherwise.

You do not need to understand it. Occasionally it happens that after an event you can get a glimpse of understanding, only a glimpse if you are lucky, tiny glimpse. Some of you may have experienced something seemingly negative and incomprehensible happening to you, life doing something to you, making you ill, serious illness, losing everything.

It doesn't make sense anymore. I went to church every Sunday and I worked my off and I lost it all. This wasn't supposed to happen.

I don't understand anymore. And years later, you sit in the Inner Directions conference and suddenly say, wow, if that hadn't happened, of course, I wouldn't be here. I would still be slaving away in the corporate office if those bad things hadn't happened to me, I would never have gone beyond the conditioning.

So occasionally you might get a glimpse, but in many other cases you may not get a glimpse of why. But it is wonderful to see that yes, there is an inevitability to whatever form this moment takes. And so if you do not resist the form that this moment takes internally, you are no longer trapped or imprisoned by the form that this moment takes.

Because very often that's what it looks like. That's why people always try to get away from this moment. Very often it looks like a limitation upon you, upon your life.

That's not what I want. What am I doing sitting here in this office, in this place, in this relationship, in this, that, this, that, the other? Whatever form this moment takes to align yourself with it, the moment you do that, and it's not a doing, only through language it creates the illusion that you're doing something.

One could say it's the opposite of any doing. To internally align yourself with what is, is the opposite of, OK, I have to do something. You don't have to do anything, just this is as it is.

Always. Recognize that. There's no doing involved.

This, it is as it is. You align yourself with a form that, you don't fight the form. The moment you fight the form, the form of me gets strengthened in yourself.

The me that is based on thought forms gets stronger through the struggle, the reaction, the reactivity against what is. Ultimately you could say the illusion of me gets strengthened through fighting what is. And you can verify that in your own life when you are resisting whatever situation, or in disagreement with someone, this shouldn't be, reactivity, to see how your sense of self feels a little bit inflated through that.

And you can see when you watch angry people who are fighting, there are some people who live almost continuously in angry opposition to what is, the entire universe is against them or they are against it. The world is their enemy and they're just looking for the next thing to get upset about. And you can see how that strengthens, how that inflates the egoic sense of self, the reactivity, the fighting what is, the complaining pattern in the mind.

And every time you complain, you strengthen a little bit the form identity of me, the complainer, the thought form, the reaction. The egoic identity inflates a little bit through the complaint because every complaint means that you are right and what you're complaining about is wrong. Situation, the person, the place.

You are superior to that which you are complaining about. That is the illusion, how the illusory self entity inflates itself continuously through that. It doesn't ever last for long and they need something else.

But once you watch that process in yourself or in another, it's a little bit easier to see it in somebody else. How the self importance grows through every complaint. The imagined superiority of me as compared to that which you are complaining about.

And some people complain about the world. Of course it's a mad place but complaining doesn't help very much. They complain about humans, people.

People are so unconscious. God! You should know better.

But they don't. So to see how that fighting what is strengthens the thought made me. And accepting what is, allowing it, surrendering to this moment, the form that this moment takes, that's all that ever changes.

This moment never changes. It's always now. Saying yes to the form doesn't mean you can't take action.

If action is needed, it comes out of the yes instead of the no. Totally different quality of action. It comes out of saying, well, this is how it is.

Here I am, two coins in my pocket, wet, not much food in the stomach. That's what is at this moment. And you go beyond the form of this moment and there is suddenly a peace from deep within.

And there is a beauty even to that moment, the form of that moment. But the beauty may not be in the form, but it comes from a deeper place of the formless, the formless life that you are, the very life that you are underneath the form as which you appear. You know it, not through rejecting the forms, but through accepting the forms.

So the magic formula then is, but it doesn't work if it remains a thought form, the forms that seem to limit you in your life are the concealed openings into the formless. The conditions that seem to limit you are the portals into the unconditioned, that which you are in your essence. And some people have experienced extreme forms of limitation in their life, physical, material, physical through the body not working properly anymore, physical limitations, present camp, some other awful limitation.

And some people have experienced, have realized when they let go of resistance to this moment, even in the most dreadful situations, the most dreadful limitations, they suddenly realized the formless space that they are. Peace. So if you can look upon your life and see where is it that life seems to limit you, what is the area where you feel hemmed in by life, the forms in your life, your life situation.

It could be relationships, it could be a place where you live, the people you live with, the physical structures around you, the house or the work situation, whatever it may be. And so almost everybody experiences some form of limitation in their life, some form of limitation, and see if there, and then you might notice also that you are in an almost habitual resistance to those limitations, those forms in your life. And see what happens if you let go of the resistance to what is.

Use that and see what happens if you let go of the no to this moment. You may be surprised how quickly things change, how quickly the stuckness gets unstuck when you surrender. And some of you have experienced it already in certain areas of your life, how quickly you become free of the conditioned, not by trying to reach some point of the unconditioned in the future, the limitless, but by not offering inner resistance to the conditioned.

With that deep acceptance of what is comes a word that I usually avoid because it can easily become a thought form and it has been misused so much. With acceptance of what is comes love. You love what is.

We don't even need to say love. It's there when there is an allowing of whatever form this moment takes. Love arises.

So the secret is not to turn your back upon the limitations and trying to reach some point in the future where you realize yourself as unlimited. Once you have sorted out your life situation, it's never going to happen. Not for long.

Then something else crops up. Instead of looking for some liberation at a future moment, the more limited you are in your life situation, there are degrees of limitation. Very limited, for example, would be if your body may not make it for that much longer anymore.

They might have said, you may have two more months. You may be limited in other areas. You may be listening to this on a tape and find yourself in a prison cell.

Those extreme limitations are the most powerful openings, the most powerful openings into presence, into space. When you surrender to that, and so it happens in some people's lives, there is one big thing, one what Christians used to call, or still do, your cross. One big thing in your life that is a dreadful burden or seems a dreadful limitation.

Most of you have many little things. That's fine too. That works too.

But the one big thing works even better. If you're lucky enough to have one big thing in your life that's absolutely unacceptable. Nobody could accept that.

Well, that's what the mind says. And then surrender happens. For many of you, it will be a case of little surrenders.

Even today as you leave here, there may be an opportunity for a little surrender in some situation. What is a little surrender? What is surrender?

It's the shift from no to yes. Surrender is detecting an inner no to what is. And then saying, ha ha, there it goes.

And then to see, well, but it is. And then you look upon what is. Acceptance means it's not judged anymore.

It's allowed to be. And there's a field of attention. There's your prison cell, which you've been extremely unhappy about for the past ten years.

And even more unhappy because you know you have another 15 years to go. And then you listen to the tape. And then you sit there and you look upon the walls that surround you and maybe a little window with bars on and an uncomfortable place that you sit on.

And there's light shining perhaps through the window. Oh yes, and your body is alive. It feels alive.

Every cell is alive. And yes, even the wall has aliveness to it. Why didn't I see that before?

Because I was looking at the wall through a screen of mental concepts. Why couldn't I feel the aliveness that is in every cell of my body before? Because I was preoccupied with the thoughts in my mind.

Mind objects in my consciousness. One after another. All saying, this is dreadful and unacceptable.

This is what my life has come to. This is what the world has done to me. Telling yourself the story in your head again and again and again.

So you couldn't feel the aliveness. You couldn't see the light. And you couldn't sense the stillness and the peace that were always there as inseparable from spacious awareness.

The essence of your being was always there. Never knew it. And this is how surrender to one big thing can take you once and for all.

Surrender is no more than surrender to this moment as it is. No other spiritual practice is required. But if you're happy with other spiritual practices, that's fine too.

But every spiritual practice ultimately points to that. So why not do it now? What beauty in welcoming the only thing there ever is, which is now.

What beauty in welcoming the form that this now takes. Whatever the form may be. And realize yourself as that which is deeper than any form.

Stillness, peace, space. Not that which happens, but the space in which it happens. That's who you are.

And so, when you look at night into space, the vastness of outer space, vast, infinite, infinite depth, that's the external version of who you are. And then you also notice when you look there, you see, oh well, it's so simple. There are basically two things in this world.

Space and things in space. It's as simple as that. The world consists of space and things in space.

Or rather, things in space are the world. Let's change it slightly. Things in space are the world, and space is that, which goes beyond anything that words could say.

But it's so obvious, even if you look through the senses, that there's basically even this room. There are things, bodies, chairs, flowers, lights, and there's space. The space usually nobody notices.

And usually nobody notices the inner space, the stillness that is underneath the noise, the incredible spaciousness that is there within you. So you are the bridge between the object world and the formless, unconditioned, the one. And you move through this world, interacting with form still.

Your body is form too. Thoughts still happen, occasionally. You interact with other forms, and the play of forms continues all around you.

And you are rooted in the formless, which is peace. And the world is then the play of forms around you, so to speak, so to speak. And nothing in the world of form matters that much anymore.

And it's only then that, and this is almost a paradox, something that is not of this world, which is the world of objects, something that is not of this world shines through this form into this world. The formless, a certain transparency happens through surrender to what is. A certain transparency happens, and so the unconditioned shines through into the world of form.

And the world of form then is experienced as a more benign place when that comes through you. And it transforms how you experience the world of form also. Not that the world of form will lose its characteristics of having polarities.

It has polarities. The world of form will always have certain polarities, otherwise forms could not survive. High, low, hot, cold.

But the manifestation of the polarities of the world of form will become more benign, not the harshness. So one could say love comes into this world and love is not of this world.

That's how the world changes.

Not that it matters that much anymore whether or not it changes. And you certainly, as you surrender to what is, you relinquish the need for the world to change. And then it changes.

And that includes the need for your world to change, your situation. It must change. Well, first accept what is and then see what happens.

Thank you. As we are approaching the end of the weekend, a weekend of awakening, I wonder how many questions have managed to survive in your mind. You may feel a pressure, almost a kind of pressure inside your mind of a question or questions wanting to be asked, needing to be answered.

And when those questions are answered, there'll be more because every answer will generate further questions. And so there's no need, there's no end to the number of questions you could ask about awakening. It is true that certain answers can be helpful they can take you up to a certain point of understanding.

Up to a certain point, understanding can be helpful. One could say it's like understanding how do I get from here to the edge of the cliff? And to know how you get from here to the edge of the cliff, to know that, certain signposts may be required to point you in the direction of the edge, that way or that way.

And when you have reached the edge, signposts are not necessary anymore, in fact they become a hindrance. An essential part of the process of awakening, and that is something that the human mind and the human ego look upon as almost an insult, an essential part of the awakening is letting go of the need to understand more. And to realize that ultimately, awakening is not to do with understanding more.

And finally when you have reached complete understanding, you're awake. And the great surprise or even shock that has come to those who have awakened they didn't know more when they awakened, if anything they knew less. So if we can participate here this afternoon, as you sit here, participate in what we could call renunciation, not renunciation of sugar or sex or material possessions or whatever it is that people try to use to become free, a deeper renunciation, because all those that I mentioned and many others are surface renunciations that could actually and very often do strengthen your conceptual identity as the one who has renounced, the one who is superior because he or she has renounced sugar, money, sex, whatever, possessions.

A deeper renunciation than that and I will put it very bluntly, don't be shocked, it's the renunciation of thought and realize it is not through thought that you can awaken. It is not through adding more to the accumulation of thought in your mind that you can awaken. It is not through any adding to yourself in any way, whether material things or

thought forms or ideas or beliefs or experiences.

It is not through adding more to yourself, to the content of your mind, that you awaken. It is not through adding more thought to the huge accumulation of thought forms that each human being, including yourself, already walks around with and derives their sense of self from, the me. And the momentum that this accumulated thought structure that most people identify with as themselves, that accumulated movement of thought with all its accumulated content, thought forms, knowledge, experiences, memories, all thoughts, that has enormous momentum and an essential part of that momentum is that it needs more to add to itself because the thought structure of yourself, the mind-made self, believes that it is not yet complete. It needs more, and that more could be more understanding.

It says, I don't yet understand the purpose of the universe. And it might say, I've come here, listened to all these speakers, and I still don't understand the purpose of the universe and how it all works and how I fit into it. What's my place in it?

That's the most important question. What about me? There's all that, but this is more important.

In a deeper sense, that is true. In a superficial sense, it's an illusion. So there is this need in the mind, that is the mind, to accumulate.

And if you are here this weekend, that means you have gone beyond the baser base forms of accumulation, well, more or less, and that is needing to accumulate material possessions, and again, it's not the material possession that is ultimately what counts to the mind, it's the thought form, because you don't know what's out there, you only know it as a thought form. That's what it wants. Identify with another thought form, the mansion, mine, the car, my car.

A thought form becomes invested with self, and so it is added to the accumulated thought forms that make up the me. And so you have already gone beyond, to a large extent, although it may still linger a little bit, those base forms of identifications. You may also have gone beyond needing to add to yourself other thought forms, the thought forms of people think that I am great, the thought forms of getting recognition, oh, aren't you great, the thought form that needs to feel that you are famous, you've made it in the eyes of the world, the world tells you, yes, yes, you are important.

The phone rings all the time. Everybody wants to talk to you. I am important.

And that's a nice thought form, and many are longing for that, that need in millions of people, particularly in Western culture, that longing of, I haven't made it yet. Once I make it, then I will be complete. And that means, once I have added further thought forms to me, further mental images of who I am, which other people will tell me, that's

who you are, ah, you are such and such, satisfying mental labels, president of this or that, so you may have gone beyond status, or status, for many years I, English pronunciation is status, status here, so that you understand what I say.

Status. It's that you've gone beyond that, probably. But the movement of needing to add more to yourself may still be there, but it may have moved to more subtle dimensions.

And the more subtle dimensions could be the dimension of knowledge, dimension of accumulating thought forms as knowledge, spiritual knowledge perhaps, having read many spiritual books, attended many workshops, retreats, Buddhist monasteries or other monasteries, or you may have come here also in that search of more, adding more to me. And perhaps that more, the most subtle of all mores, was the more of spiritual realization, the ultimate attainment. I can add that and then I'll be finally complete.

And you look for it then in the realm of understanding more, which is mind. And that can keep you trapped in the subtle realms of needing more for the rest of your life. And that is the fate of being a spiritual seeker for the rest of your life.

In itself, not such a bad identity, spiritual seeker. It's better than many others. But the seeking movement is there, the not yet having found is there, because there has not been a renunciation of the movement of thought, because it's the movement of thought that is the momentum behind the search for more.

So when we speak of renouncing thought, we are not saying that you are never to think again. It is the awakening out of the stream of thinking, with which perhaps you've been identified all your life as a me. And the possibility of stepping out of that movement of thought is always here now.

And it is here now, as you sit here. Listen. You can sit here with a burning question at the back or the front of your mind.

I'm going to ask him, when the moment he stops speaking, I'm going to ask him that question. It doesn't make sense what he's saying. Or you can sit here as a field of alert, aware presence, in which the words are being perceived, almost as if they were coming from within yourself, in which all the other peripheral perceptions are taking place, visual, man sitting on a chair, flowers.

I'm labeling the perceptions right now, but as you perceive in that spacious field of presence that you are, you perceive through that, the need to label, the compulsive need to label what is going on around you at any moment, to work it out, to interpret. I need to know, what's this speaker going on about? That compulsive need is renounced.

Now that sounds as if you could do something, as if you could, when I say this, it sounds as if you could choose to step out of that continuous stream of thinking into spacious awareness. And from one perspective, you can. It is true, but it's only a perspective, and

whatever words say, it's only a perspective, because words are thoughts.

These words, these thoughts that have become words, point beyond themselves, they are pointers. In themselves, they are not really helpful. If you can never go beyond the signpost, like the dog that continuously looks at the master's finger, and the master says, the stick is there, there, I threw it there.

If you can't go beyond the signpost, then you go home with a few more accumulated signposts. Not enough yet, of course. So is it true that you can choose to step out of the identification with that stream of thinking and be present?

Yes, from one perspective. But how is it that there are other people in this city who didn't come here, and if they were here, they would say, what the hell is he talking about? It doesn't make sense at all.

I occasionally, because now so many people read The Power of Now, occasionally it gets into the hands of people who are not quite ready for it yet. And occasionally I get emails that say, your book makes no sense whatsoever. So when I say you can choose to step out of the stream of thinking, this may not be true for everyone.

But how is it that you can do that, and somebody else in this city, who may be engaged in other activities right now, cannot do it? Well, perhaps they can, but they don't know they can. Somehow the apple is not ripe yet.

And so here we come to the limits of language, because it's ultimately not you doing it. It's a way of putting it. It's a way of looking at it.

But when you feel that, yes, I can step out of presence, which is still a thought, that's not it of course. I can step out of identification with thinking to experience the peace that is there when you can be without the need to think. And the thoughts that may still arise are not that important anymore, because there is space around them.

You can do that because it's happening here through you. It wants to happen. There is an evolutionary impulse at work in humanity.

And to say that you can step out of identification with mental noise, identification with concepts, identification with the seeking entity, the me, to say that really means when you feel, yes, that unconditioned consciousness is suddenly there. It wants to flower through this form. If it didn't want to flower through this form, you couldn't do it, because you and it are not separate.

Only language creates the separation. So whatever we say about it, do not believe that there is any absolute truth in anything that words can say about it. So a shift, an inner shift, from thought to awareness, presence, and then the miracle happens, and it is happening for many of you here now, of being here as a field of awareness, rather than

as a person.

And the miracle is there when you can look upon this room, listen to this voice, and let it be so completely, allow it to be as it is so completely, that there is no need to add mental commentaries to it. You can look at the flowers and perceive it through what we could call stillness, alert, aware stillness. And that is the arising of an intelligence that is far greater than the limited human mind, which is only a small aspect of the vastness of intelligence, the one intelligence.

And that's again a very limited word. The arising within you of non-conceptual intelligence. That is what Krishnamurti called the awakening of intelligence.

And that is there when you renounce thought. Thought subsides. It can still happen, and when it's needed, it's there, beautifully, not problematically.

When a sense of self is invested in thought, thought becomes problematic, and the self that almost everybody lives with, is burdened with, that sense of self is in itself problematic. You cannot separate problematic from yourself. They are indistinguishable.

To walk around with a mind-derived self is to be problematic, is to live in a problematic life situation, and to experience your life as problematic, because you live mostly then in past and future, which is problematic. Whereas this moment is not problematic ever. There's no room for problematic here.

Here? How can a problem survive here? It only survives as a thought form in the head that is invested with self.

What's going to happen to me, that's the ultimate question. Am I going to make it, or is the universe going to defeat me? And so you get, this becomes the antagonistic attitude towards life.

The fight against this or that, the fight against violence, the fight against hatred, and then you get the fight against illness. We are going to get you. Problematic.

So to step out of all that, so that your self, your sense of self, is no longer in the movement of thought, that's all that it is, there's still a movement of thought, your sense of self is not invested in every thought that arises. This way, you're pulled this way, and then you're pulled that way. Or you may have deeply lodged thoughts that never leave you, obsessions, convictions, beliefs, this is how it is.

This is how it is. Just ask me, I'll tell you how it is. Deeply entrenched thought forms that many people walk around with, and they say, that's me.

They don't see it as thought forms that they walk around with, they are the thought forms. They are the convictions. They are the one who is looking for somebody to

disagree with, to strengthen their sense of self.

They are their thoughts. So stepping out of that is the great liberation. It's the renunciation, and to some people the renunciation of that thought comes because they can't stand thought anymore.

It becomes so painful that finally they renounce. And what they do then is they, the renunciation of thought, of course, is also the renunciation of past and future, except for practical things, that's okay. But as that overwhelming concern with me and my future, and things that happened in the past, things that are going to happen to me, or not going to happen to me, renounce that and recognize that past and future are only thought forms, no more.

They have no existence. Time, which is past and future, has no existence except as thought. You cannot encounter past and future.

Nobody has ever met the past, touched it, seen it, lived in it. You may think people lived in the past. How can they live in the past?

The Romans, they lived 2,000 years ago. That sounds plausible. But of course they didn't.

They lived in the now. And so unless you create a thought form of past, there is no past. And the moment you can only create a thought form, at this moment, out of the fullness of now, which is consciousness itself, oh, is that what it is?

Yes. The now is unconditioned, pure consciousness itself, primordial intelligence. And out of that arise forms, thought forms.

And they become the conditioned form consciousness. And then thought forms become material forms. So we have thought, which are objects in consciousness.

Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, they are all objects because they become, you perceive what you call a flower. It somehow, the image goes through your eyes, becomes a nerve impulse, whatever they say. Then gets reconstructed in the brain, which nobody, the greatest doctor has no idea how it works.

And then you get an image arises of a flower. It's a thought form too. An object in consciousness, not conceptual thought.

Sense perception, conceptual thought. Objects in consciousness and consciousness. Most people walk around identified continuously with objects in consciousness.

They don't know themselves as the underlying space. Space consciousness. Here we have another pointer, in case you didn't get the first one.

In ultimate terms, objects in consciousness are things. Because we are speaking of form. So most people's lives consist of things that they are concerned with.

Thoughts are things, material things, that comes first. And that's for a large part of the population of the planet. Their entire existence is consumed by concern with material things.

And that applies both to the poor part of the world and to the wealthy part of the world. The poor are concerned with material things because they may not have enough to meet all the needs of the body. And the wealthy are concerned with material things because nothing is ever enough to the me.

I need more. It's the unconscious movement of more. So there's one level on which one's life, one's entire existence is concerned with things, objects.

And then things in a wider sense are anything that arises in your mind as an object. Thought forms, experiences, knowledge. One thing after another arises inside you.

It's a burden to live in such a way. One's life being consumed by one damn thing after another. You know how life is.

It never leaves you alone. The next thing comes. And it demands your attention.

It can be a thought that demands your attention. It can be a phone call, which is also a thought. This is important.

This is what's going on. And when you've solved one thing, another one comes up from behind. So you may have noticed the world of things doesn't leave you alone.

It always has something. There's always some new thing that comes up to demand your attention. You're surrounded by things.

And not only outside, unfortunately. And then you carry the accumulated content of thought forms inside you, which is object consciousness, we could say. And you are burdened with that.

And this is how people live, how they at work, in families. That continues one thing after another. What's the next thing we have to do?

And another, another. And when they're not concerned with things, they go into the hypnotic state of switching on some entertainment device. First consumed by things.

And then finally, click. What a life. It's living in a room crammed full with things.

You can't even move in it anymore. And then you step out of identification with thought forms. How do you do that?

Says the thought form. Give me a technique. Says another thought.

Okay, there are seven steps. That will take you seven years. Now, if we did that here, this gathering would be more satisfying to the mind.

Because you could go home and tell your family, when they ask you, what did you come away with? What did you learn? And you could say, I learned seven steps, and it'll take me seven years.

Oh, that's great. You got your money's worth. And so it's satisfying to be given more time to the mind, because it has that need.

It loves it. It's just waiting for something like that. And it's frustrating to the mind to be sitting here and saying, okay, yeah, but how?

We can say, renounce thought. We could say, renounce time. But even that is still maybe a little bit abstract.

To put it even more simply, we could say, renounce the next moment. Because you notice that most of your life, you're more interested in the next moment than in this one. A deeply conditioned movement.

Renounce that need for the next moment. The psychological need for, okay, what's next? And be completely with this.

What is. Now. Completely allowing this moment so precious.

Not precious because it's fleeting. That's a superficial way of looking at the present moment. Sometimes people say, this moment is so fleeting, just, you know, it'll be over soon.

Just, it's so, just hang on to it and remember it, remember it. Take a photo of it. No, it's not precious because of that.

Because the present moment is not fleeting. The forms are fleeting that arise in the field of now. Come and go.

But when you enter the now with your attention, and don't take it too literally, it's just a pointer. When you enter the now with your attention, then you renounce the next moment. And a completely different quality of being arises.

When you become present to what is. Instead of denying it, running away from it, making it a means to an end. And it is at that moment the mind falls away.

And then you realize how vast the space is inside you and how relatively insignificant anything in object consciousness is compared to the depth, the spaciousness within you.

The stillness. How relatively insignificant any thought that comes into your mind is.

Relatively insignificant. How relatively insignificant anything that happens or doesn't happen is. You see the relativity of whatever happens in the realm of object consciousness, in the realm of things.

Okay, it's nicer perhaps to live in a beautiful place than to live in a beautiful mansion than to live in a little hut or a little room on the surface. Yes, it might be nicer. But if you are, if you have not found the dimension that is beyond object consciousness in yourself and live in a mansion, the mansion is not going to do that much for you.

And if you have found it in the little room, whether you are in a little room or a mansion, doesn't matter that much anymore. Because there is such aliveness to the field of now it doesn't really matter where you go. What the things are that surround you it's relative, they matter relatively but not absolutely.

And then the the universe around you is recognized as playful forms that come and go. Experiences, different places come and go. It's a bit like when you are rooted in the now you are rooted in being.

You are rooted in yourself. And there is such fullness to now. It is the fullness of life itself because before life becomes a thing, before life becomes an object, before life becomes a life form there is life, consciousness, whatever word.

And to know yourself as that is the ultimate liberation. What is liberation? What are you liberated from?

You are liberated from the world of things, from obsession, from being consumed by things which includes thoughts. You are liberated from time also as an obsession that you are consumed by. And you are liberated from a very heavy sense of self, a me, what the Buddha called the self.

Ah, all that. The key then, the little opening into what we might call space consciousness. This is not from science fiction.

Space consciousness within yourself, the unconditioned consciousness. How do I get from being consumed and identified with object consciousness to recognizing myself as space? Ah, it doesn't work by trying to run away from the world.

It's through allowing whatever form this moment takes, the world of form, the world of objects, allowing whatever form this moment takes, internally allowing it to be as it is. External forms, inner forms, thoughts, emotions, feelings. Allow the suchness of this moment.

No longer make the now into an enemy. The moment you allow what is to be, there is

what one could call a sense of space around what is. It could be an event that usually would trigger in you upset or impatience or anger.

And you'd simply say yes to it because it is. And suddenly there's space around the event. It's just a little pointer.

This is a beautiful thing to discover, the space around things. Why should I allow something to be because it is? It already is the case.

Yeah, but it shouldn't be happening. But it is. At this moment the mind says nothing will ever change if I allow this moment to be as it is.

The deeper truth is if I internally am antagonistic towards this moment, ultimately nothing is ever going to change. Because that is the old consciousness which keeps itself in place, the egoic consciousness, the mind-identified consciousness, the object-identified consciousness keeps itself in place through fighting what is, the me. How could one argue with the is-ness of this moment once you realize that the entire cosmos is connected, interconnected, everything in the cosmos is totally interconnected.

Physicists know that. So nothing that happens is isolated, an isolated event. It is connected with the totality.

And within the totality it makes sense. In many, many cases you could never work out through your understanding, mental understanding, how an event that on the surface looks senseless or looks as if it shouldn't be happening, you could never work out through intellectual understanding how the totality has brought this event about. Because no mind, no human mind can even understand a fragment of the totality.

It would be presumptuous to an absurd degree to believe that through the human mind you could understand the totality of the universe. And then explain it through words, using five vowel sounds. A, I, E, O, U.

Five sounds are the basic sounds. And then there are the others, they're called consonants, I think. They are sounds that are produced through air pressure, produced by sh, f, ch.

So you have the five vowel sounds plus a few noises produced through air pressure. And we believe that we could explain something. The universe.

So it is how useful it is to give up trying to understand. But what we can see, and this is confirmed not only by the ancient wisdom traditions of humanity, such as Buddhism, but also even through recent discoveries in molecular atomic physics, the interconnectedness of all things. That we can know yes, we don't know how, we can't understand how, in what way, but we can see yes, it all is ultimately one, the universe is one.

It is one, both at the unmanifested level, the primordial one, the unconditioned one, the unborn as the Buddha called it, the unborn, the uncreated, the unmanifested. Beautiful saying of the Buddha, he said, there is, O monks, that's how the translation goes, there is, O monks, the uncreated, the unborn, the unmanifested. If there were not the uncreated, the unborn, the unmanifested, there would be no escape from the born, the created, the manifested.

So to, yes, we can see the universe is one, both as the unmanifested, obviously, and it is one as an organism, even in the manifested realm, it is one organism, which has many different selves to it. One cell in the organism is humanity, humanity also is one organism, and what humans are doing to each other is a diseased organism in many ways. So the universe is one organism, whatever happens has its place within the totality, even if it seems completely incomprehensible.

And many things do happen that see, why is this happening? And just to simply see what one could call the inevitability of what is, within the context, the larger context of the whole, to see the inevitability of whatever form this moment takes in your life, whatever happens, could not be otherwise. You do not need to understand it, and occasionally it happens that after an event you can get a glimpse of understanding, only a glimpse if you are lucky, a tiny glimpse.

Some of you may have experienced something seemingly negative and incomprehensible happening to you, life doing something to you, making you ill, serious illness, losing everything. It doesn't make sense anymore, I went to church every Sunday and I worked my off and I lost it all, this wasn't supposed to happen, I don't understand anymore. And years later, you sit in the Inner Directions conference and suddenly you say, wow, if that hadn't happened of course I wouldn't be here, I would still be slaving away in the corporate office, if those bad things hadn't happened to me, I would never have gone beyond the conditioning.

So occasionally you might get a glimpse, but in many other cases you may not get a glimpse of why. But it is wonderful to see that yes, there is an inevitability to whatever form this moment takes. And so if you do not resist the form that this moment takes, internally, you are no longer trapped or imprisoned by the form that this moment takes.

Because very often that's what it looks like. That's why people always try to get away from this moment. Very often it looks like a limitation upon you, upon your life.

That's not what I want. What am I doing sitting here, in this office, in this place, in this relationship, in this, that, this, that, the other. Whatever form this moment takes to align yourself with it.

The moment you do that, and it's not a doing, only through language it creates the illusion that you're doing something. One could say it's the opposite of any doing. To

internally align yourself with what is is the opposite of, OK, I have to do something.

You don't have to do anything, just this is as it is. Always. Recognize that.

There's no doing involved. This, it is as it is. You align yourself with the form that you don't fight the form.

The moment you fight the form, the form of me gets strengthened in yourself. The me that is based on my thought forms gets stronger through the struggle, the reaction, the reactivity against what is. Ultimately you could say the illusion of me gets strengthened through fighting what is.

And you can verify that in your own life when you are resisting whatever situation or in disagreement with someone this shouldn't be reactivity to see how your sense of self feels a little bit inflated through that. And you can see when you watch angry people who are fighting, there are some people who live almost continuously in angry opposition to what is. The entire universe is against them or they are against it.

The world is their enemy and they are just looking for the next thing to get upset about. And you can see how that strengthens, how that inflates the egoic sense of self, the reactivity, the fighting what is, the complaining pattern in the mind. And every time you complain you strengthen a little bit the form identity of me, the complainer, the thought form, the reaction.

The egoic identity inflates a little bit through the complaint because every complaint means that you are right and what you are complaining about is wrong. The situation, the person, the place. You are superior to that which you are complaining about.

That is the illusion how the illusory self entity inflates itself continuously through that. It doesn't ever last for long and they need something else. But once you watch that process in yourself or in another, it's a little bit easier to see it in somebody else, how the self importance grows through every complaint.

The imagined superiority of me as compared to that which you are complaining about. And some people complain about the world. Of course it's a mad place but complaining doesn't help very much.

They complain about humans, people. People are so unconscious. God!

What? You should know better. But they don't.

To see how that fighting what is strengthens the thought made me. And accepting what is, allowing it, surrendering to this moment, the form that this moment takes. That's all that ever changes.

This moment never changes. It's always now. Saying yes to the form doesn't mean you

can't take action.

If action is needed, it comes out of the yes instead of the no. Totally different quality of action that comes out of saying, well, this is how it is. Here I am.

Two coins in my pocket. Wet. Not much food in the stomach.

That's what is at this moment.

[Speaker 3] (2:02:34 - 2:02:35)

Hmm.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:35 - 3:37:34)

Okay. And you go beyond the form of this moment and there is suddenly a peace from deep within. And there's a beauty even to that moment, the form of that moment, but the beauty may not be in the form, but it comes from a deeper place of the formless.

The formless life that you are, the very life that you are underneath the form as which you appear, you know it not through rejecting the forms but through accepting the forms. So the magic formula then is, but it doesn't work if it remains a thought form, the forms that seem to limit you in your life are the concealed openings into the formless. The conditions that seem to limit you are the portals into the unconditioned.

That which you are in your essence. And some people have experienced extreme forms of limitation in their life, physical, material, physical through the body, not working properly anymore. Physical limitations, present cam, some other awful limitation.

And some people have experienced, have realized when they let go of resistance to this moment, even in the most dreadful situations, the most dreadful limitations, they suddenly realized the formless space that they are. Peace. So if you can look upon your life and see where is it that life seems to limit you, what is the area where you feel hemmed in by life, the forms in your life, your life situation.

It could be relationships, it could be a place where you live, the people you live with, the physical structures around you, the house, or the work situation, whatever it may be. And so almost everybody experiences some form of limitation in their life, some form of limitation. And see if there, and then you might notice also that you are in an almost habitual resistance to those limitations, those forms in your life.

And see what happens if you let go of the resistance to what is. Use that and see what happens if you let go of the no to this moment. You may be surprised how quickly things change, how quickly the stuckness gets unstuck when you surrender.

And some of you have experienced it already in certain areas of your life. How quickly

you become free of the conditioned, not by trying to reach some point of the unconditioned in the future, the limitless, but by not offering inner resistance to the conditioned. With that deep acceptance of what is comes a word that I usually avoid because it can easily become a thought form and it is so misused so much.

With acceptance of what is comes love. You love what is. It goes, we don't even need to say love.

It's there when you, there's an allowing of whatever form this moment takes. Love arises. So the secret is not to turn your back upon the limitations and trying to reach some point in the future where you realize yourself as unlimited.

Once you've sorted out your life situation it's never going to happen. Not for long. Then some new things, something else crops up.

Instead of looking for some liberation at a future moment, the more limited you are in your life situation there are degrees of limitation. Very limited for example would be your body may not make it for that much longer anymore. They might have said you may have two months, two more months.

You may be limited in other areas. You may be listening to this on a tape and find yourself in a prison cell. Those extreme limitations are the most powerful openings, the most powerful openings into presence, into space.

When you surrender to that, and so it happens in some people's lives there's one big thing, one what Christians used to call or still do your cross. One big thing in your life that is a dreadful burden or seems a dreadful limitation. Most of you have many little things.

That's fine too. That works too. But the one big thing works even better.

If you're lucky enough to have one big thing in your life that's absolutely unacceptable. Nobody could accept that. Well, that's what the mind says.

And then surrender happens. For many of you it will be a case of little surrenders. Even today as you leave here there may be an opportunity for a little surrender in some situation.

What is a little surrender? What is surrender? It's the shift from no to yes.

Surrender is detecting an inner no to what is. And then saying, ha ha, there it goes. And then to see well, but it is.

And then you look upon what is. Acceptance means it's not judged anymore. It's allowed to be.

And there's a field of attention. There's your prison cell which you've been extremely unhappy about for the past ten years. And even more unhappy because you know you have another fifteen years to go.

And then you listen to the tape. And then you sit there and you look upon the walls that surround you and maybe a little window with bars on and an uncomfortable place that you sit on. And there's light shining perhaps through the window.

Oh yes, and your body is alive. It feels alive. Every cell is alive.

And yes, even the wall has aliveness to it. Why didn't I see that before? Because I was looking at the wall through a screen of mental concepts.

Why couldn't I feel the aliveness that is in every cell of my body before? Because I was preoccupied with the thoughts in my mind. Mind objects in my consciousness.

One after another. All saying, this is dreadful and unacceptable. This is what my life has come to.

This is what the world has done to me. Telling yourself the story in your head again and again and again so you couldn't feel the aliveness. You couldn't see the light.

And you couldn't sense the stillness and the peace that were always there as inseparable from spacious awareness. The essence of your being was always there. Never knew it.

And this is how surrender to one big thing can take you once and for all. Surrender is no more than surrender to this moment as it is. No other spiritual practice is required.

But if you are happy with other spiritual practices, that's fine too. But every spiritual practice ultimately points to that. So why not do it now?

What beauty in welcoming the only thing there ever is, which is now. What beauty in welcoming the form that this now takes, whatever the form may be. And realize yourself as that which is deeper than any form.

Stillness, peace, space. Not that which happens, but the space in which it happens. That's who you are.

And so, when you look at night into space, the vastness of outer space, vast, infinite, infinite depth, that's the external version of who you are. And then you also notice when you look there, you see, oh well, it's so simple. There are basically two things in this world.

Space and things in space. It's as simple as that. The world consists of space and things in space.

Or rather, things in space are the world. Let's change it slightly. Things in space are the world, and space is that, which goes beyond anything that words could say.

But it's so obvious, even if you look through the senses, that there's basically even this room. There are things, bodies, chairs, flowers, lights, and there's space. The space usually nobody notices.

And usually nobody notices the inner space, the stillness that is underneath the noise, the incredible spaciousness that is there, within you. So you are the bridge between the object world and the formless, unconditioned one. And you move through this world, interacting with form, still.

Your body is form, too. Thoughts still happen, occasionally. You interact with other forms, and the play of forms continues all around you, and you are rooted in the formless, which is peace.

And the world is then the play of forms around you, so to speak. And nothing in the world of form matters that much anymore. And it's only then that, and this is almost a paradox, something that is not of this world, which is the world of objects, something that is not of this world shines through this form into this world.

The formless, a certain transparency happens through surrender to what is, a certain transparency happens, and so the unconditioned shines through into the world of form, and the world of form then is experienced as a more benign place when that comes through you. And it transforms how you experience the world of form, also. Not that the world of form will lose its characteristics of having polarities.

It has polarities, the world of form will always have certain polarities, otherwise forms could not survive. High, low, hot, cold. But the manifestation of the polarities of the world of form will become more benign, not the harshness.

So one could say, love comes into this world, and love is not of this world. That's how the world changes. Not that it matters that much anymore, whether or not it changes.

And you certainly, as you surrender to what is, you relinquish the need for the world to change. And then it changes. And that includes the need for your world to change, your situation.

It must change. Well, first accept what is, and then see what happens. Thank you.

Welcome. I believe we are waiting for the workshop on the now. I would also like to welcome people who are with us in other places, in Toronto, Lenox, Massachusetts, Fort Lauderdale, and even Ireland.

Galway in Ireland. In all those places, it's later than it is here. So you are in the future,

and we are in the now.

And since you are in the future, you can tell us, if you could, what it's like to be in the future. Because so far I haven't met anybody who has ever experienced it. I haven't met anybody who has ever experienced anything that is not now.

Ever. And even if you had a time traveler, if there is such a thing, if you traveled into the past and then came back, and then I asked you how you experienced that past, you would have to say, well, to me, it was the now. And even if you were a time traveler from the future and came back here from the future to become governor of California, you would have to say, well, there it's also now.

Now, most, this is something that one cannot really argue with, the fact that life is always now, that your life is always, always has been and always will be now. And yet, on the other hand, time seems to be so, such an enormous force in one's life, such an overpowering thing that absorbs most people's attention almost completely. And if you look at it, it seems that time cannot be denied.

There must be something that we call time because it's everywhere. You can test it, buy a fresh apple and put it on a windowsill. It's fresh, it's alive, full of life, shiny.

And you come back two months later and look at it and it's soft, it's shrunk, it's shrivelly and you can't even eat it anymore. What happened? It's time.

Any event in your life, how fleeting it all is. If you look at your past, the last vacation you had, gone up in smoke. This morning's breakfast, while it may still be in your stomach, but the experience of it has already receded.

And when not long ago I met some friends I hadn't seen in a very, very long time, 25 years or so. And when I first saw them I got a shock and maybe they got a shock when they saw me. I don't know.

But my first impression was that they were ill. And then I realized, no, 25 years had passed. And the woman who was last, 55 or so when I saw her was now 75 or more.

I don't know. The shock, what happened to you? Then I realized it was time.

What has time done to you? It burns you up or it dries you out. One can look at it from any perspective you like.

And then you reach the end of your life and even the memories, the memory traces in the mind, my life. Was that ever? It still seemed like a dream.

It's gone. Even this gathering here lasts until later this afternoon, 5 o'clock or so. Then you'll be gone.

It'll be over. Time has dissolved. It only exists as a memory that you remember now.

If you remember it, you'll have to remember it in the now. So wherever we look, time seems to be dissolving things. Imagine this room.

Imagine yourself as a disembodied field of awareness in this room, observing a speeded up version of this room like the films that you have seen when you see a flower coming out of the soil, the bud opening all within one minute and wilting. Now if you were a disembodied intelligence in this room, observing what happens to this room, let's say it were condensed. The elapsing time were condensed every minute 500 years.

And you're here watching. It would be the most dreadful shock of your life, because the first thing you would see is bodies in this room dissolving one after another. They would dissolve.

Just a few bones left and then dust. So you would be sitting here and everywhere people would be popping out of existence. And then the material things would take a little longer.

But there too the wooden things eventually become dust and crumble. Even the walls. And then it gets speeded up even more.

You can see it all returning into nothingness out of which it came. Is that a frightening thing? From one perspective, it is.

There's also a strangely peaceful thing that comes over you when you contemplate how impermanent all forms are. So your life, if we speak in terms of time, has a past and a future. Your life situation.

We can look on it as if you have these ancient scrolls that you unroll. And then, let's say, on the left you have writing and images. That's your past.

Your past situation. On the right you have writing and images. That is your future.

And that becomes, the further you go, more and more illegible. You can't quite figure it out. And at some point there's your date of death.

But that's illegible too. So most people walk around with a sense of self, a sense of existence that is very wide. That is my past, my future.

Their life situation. And to most people, their life situation gives them their sense of identity. Those are the circumstances of your life.

What the past, what you experienced, learned in the past, what happened to you in the past, what people did to you, what you did to other people, how you interacted with the world. And then the continuation of that, the future, which is, to most people, very, very

important. So time seems to be very overwhelming and one cannot deny on one level its existence.

And yet, now comes the strange, indisputable fact that all you ever experience is the present moment. So on the one hand, time seems to be an enormous power and yet on the other hand, if you pay close attention, you realize that your life is always no more and no less than this moment. From the point of view of time, this moment doesn't even exist because it's only the transition from past into future.

So we are here to explore more fully that dimension in you that we call the now. So as we are here, we are temporarily folding back the scroll of your past and your future, your life situation until what remains is just this moment. And what we'll do is we go more deeply into this dimension here.

When you leave here, you can pick up the scroll and unroll it again. But hopefully, you will realize the power that lies concealed in that central part of your life that to most people is peripheral. When you realize nothing in your life can happen, nothing you can experience, nothing, think nothing, feel nothing, do nothing that is not at this moment.

Most people live as if this moment were an obstacle that they need to overcome. And this moment is life. This moment conceals the fullness of life.

The only place where life can be found is now. And to most people, it's an obstacle. That's a deep-seated mental habit that we all inherit collectively.

They are more interested in some other moment, the next one, or the one after that. They treat this moment as a means to an end. I really want to get to that moment.

Most of their lives, they live like that. And that is a dysfunctional way to live because you miss your entire life. You miss the dimension of depth in your life.

And all you have, you're floating around on the surface of things. At first sight, this moment is not interesting in many cases to the human mind, which is used to past and future. So to realize the aliveness of this moment, it helps greatly.

I'm telling you this now because this is essential so that you can endure sitting here for several hours without feeling that you cannot stand this now anymore. If you cannot stand this now anymore, that means you cannot stand yourself anymore. You need to escape into some world of make-believe in the mind.

So how to be here and stay anchored in here and explore the vertical dimension of your life because you've been concerned about the horizontal for a whole lifetime. My life situation, these things that happened to me didn't quite, that worked out, that didn't work out. But no life situation, anybody's life situation here has worked itself out to their complete satisfaction.

Every life situation has a dilemma in it. Every life situation is problematic. Every life situation is as yet unresolved.

There are lots of loose ends, things that should have gone differently but didn't. The story is not totally satisfying ever of me. The story of me, that's the life situation that exists in time.

But the story of me, of course, still has a future. I think one day I can complete the story of me and one day I will feel completely and fully myself. I will have arrived at that sense of being totally rooted, that sense of total security and peace and aliveness.

Be fully myself. One day, the story of me will reach that point where I can say, that's it. That's it.

It's complete. I have arrived. And then I will be myself.

But I'm not fully myself yet. Almost everybody feels that. And if you make the mistake of picking up a gossip magazine with lots of photos, you can see the images of people who the publishers pretend have made it.

Their stories are complete. They live in a mansion. They look glamorous.

But then you just wait for the next edition when you see that they're on drugs. They're continuously getting divorced and married with all the suffering that comes. Their life is in shambles too.

It hasn't, the story hasn't quite completed itself. And on that level, it never really will. On the level of your life situation or on the level of time, there's always a sense of incompleteness.

If you derive your sense of self from the story of me, there will always be some sense of incompleteness. I'm not yet fully me. 500 years later, if it could prolong your life, I need another 500 years.

Just give me a little bit more time. And if this were a seminar where I could give you steps how to achieve at the state of inner connectedness, the state of that is also the state of peace, in 14 easy steps that only take as many years, you would probably feel satisfied because you could take something home with you and feel he has given us time. That feels good.

Now from one level, sitting here is unsatisfying because our gathering works on a different level. Nothing is being given to you. Not even food for thought, ultimately.

So how does it work? What is the point in sitting here? Sitting here works on three levels.

One is something is being pointed out here. You are given little pointers so that you can

look at something that before you had taken completely for granted in your life and question that and see that ultimately there is a dysfunction here. Before you can see that something is dysfunctional or even insane, I call normal insane.

Normal human consciousness has a strong streak of insanity to it. If anybody doesn't believe this, go and buy a book on history, human history. 20th century is best because it's the most insane of all, when humans killed a hundred million or so of their own species in one century alone.

But all the centuries are pretty mad. Just you can't see it in such magnitude. The madness has now become magnified and perhaps it's also accelerating.

Yes, there is a strong element of dysfunction in the human mind and we are addressing that here. You will see how that can be recognized in the collective energy field, consciousness of the planet, of humanity, of history and primarily in yourself, in your own life, because the collective is only a reflection of the individuals. And when you see a pattern in yourself, for example, that you are never present in the only place, in the only time where life is, here and now, that are very rarely present in the here and now, when you see that, become conscious of that, to some extent you are already stepping out, you have one foot out of that dysfunction when you see it.

The person who knows that they are mad, that person is not completely mad anymore. Because the seeing of a dysfunctional pattern in oneself is not part of the dysfunctional pattern. So as we speak, it seems that part of the time, what we are pointing to, is the so-called bad news.

The bad news of human dysfunction. But it is good to see that, because you become in the seeing of it, you become free. It is the first step to freedom, one step out.

If you have seen the film A Beautiful Mind, you will see that there is a person here who is totally identified with his highly, high-powered mind, and at some point in the film you realize that his reality, to a large extent, is delusional. The viewer realizes that the reality of this scientist is delusional the moment that he also realizes his reality, to a large extent, that he has delusions. Delusion.

And that is the moment when he begins to become healed. Because when he realizes delusion, recognizes delusion as delusion, something has arisen that is not part of the delusion. Awareness.

Presence. Ah. So it is good to point out certain dysfunctions that you can then see in yourself.

Nothing personal in that. That is one level on which this gathering works. The other level is giving you little pointers to show you how you can exit the dysfunctional state of consciousness.

Or, to look at it from another perspective, portals into a different state of consciousness. That is the other level at which this gathering works. And the third level at which this gathering works is not to do with words, or thoughts, or concepts.

It is to do with this is hard to put into words because it's not to do with words, becoming attuned to an energy field that is here in this gathering. That has nothing to do with the words, and yet out of which the words come. The energy field of presence.

And even if you went to sleep occasionally, that would still be working. It would seep in. And for those of you, there may be some who got dragged here by a friend and cannot stand staying here the whole afternoon, I will give you something now that perhaps one day you will find extremely helpful when the time comes and suffering arises and you become ready for this transformation.

And this is also for everybody else here, for the rest of this gathering, I will be reminding you throughout, we come now to the first exit point out of the time bound state of consciousness. As you sit here, make sure that you can sense, even if it's only in the background, the aliveness that is in your body. Because your body, undoubtedly, is alive.

But most people have no feeling of connectedness with the aliveness that is in every cell and in every organ of their body. And not just aliveness, the intelligence that underlies the entire functioning of the body. They live in the upper compartment here.

They occupy this building, but they live in the loft. And in the loft, they run around from one corner to another like a little mouse. Very busy up there.

And saying, I'm so restless. I don't know what to do next. What's the next thing that I need to do?

What's next? Next is always, when you're identified with the time-bound, mind-identified consciousness, the next thing is always more important than this. What's the next thing I have to do?

And then you have a whole industry to satisfy your greed for the next thing, the mind's greed. More stimulus, switch this on that, switch that. And so, that state of unease is quite normal.

And then illnesses come very quickly because you're not here. So, it is a dreadful fate to be trapped up here in the continuous stream of thinking that is the human mind, 98% of which is totally repetitive, doesn't get you anywhere whatsoever, in fact, gets you into a lot of trouble. 2% you need.

Maybe 10%. But all the thinking that goes on, that most people are totally identified with as who they are, one thought arises, next thought arises, the next thought arises. Oh, I'm so worried about that.

I don't know what's going to happen. Of course you don't know what's going to happen. I need to know.

And then, it always functions through past and future, so you have this enormous weight that you carry. On your left you have your past, on the right you have your future, both are enormous burdens because the past is also not all that great. Sometimes you try to convince yourself, and the future is very problematic.

It has two faces, hope and fear. Maybe things will get better. Maybe I will find myself somewhere there.

But on the other hand, deep down, everybody knows that eventually things will not get better. Because no matter how long they get better for, a point will come when they get worse on the level of form. They must do.

Because it is the destiny of forms to dissolve. So even if you build up an empire, and it's just a question of which one goes first, you or the empire. It is in the nature of forms not to last.

And so if you derive your sense of self from this, that you carry around as me, it is a place of continuous fear and unease. Hope, fear and unease, of not enough, of insufficiency. And so you walk around life with this burden of me, this unease, trying to I'm not full yet.

What does... I'm not yet... I need to try a little bit more of this to complete my sense of self.

Buy that. All advertisers know that your sense of self is not complete yet. And what they want to do to make you feel even more incomplete.

And so you buy their product and for a moment you can add the mental image of this product to who you think you are. Because it's yours now. My such and such car, house, dress, shoes.

So you've added a object, mental object to who I am. It's mine. For a moment it completes you.

It doesn't last long. Sometimes it's only the act of shopping that completes you. The adding something to me.

And then you get home and you look at it and it still feels good and then you put it in your wardrobe and five years later you discover it's still there. It was only the act of adding that was important. And people look for things to add.

This is why the future is so important. Because your sense of self is derived from a mind-made accumulation of images and thoughts about who you are. So you need it's always

not enough.

So everyone is on the lookout for more. That's why they desperately need the future. Because the future will give them the more they believe.

And it does. But it doesn't complete them. Never for long.

Fame. Wanted fame. And most people think if fame and fortune come, then surely I will have made it.

Now, if you look at all the famous people, they are just as unhappy as everybody else. Some are more unhappy. Except for a few who have looked through fame and fortune and seen that's not who I am.

And they've gone deeper. Sometimes you have to get everything that you thought you needed and still not feel complete and then you realize that that is not where you find your identity. Your true self.

And that is not where you find the lasting peace that is part of who you are in your essence. There's nothing wrong with adding things. Experiences, knowledge, expertise, even possessions.

But if it is a search for an identity, if there is a me invested in that, then that also is a form of suffering. Because you never get there. So, the need for more is overpowering in human beings because they are looking for themselves.

The need for more could even be here with the need to be fed more concepts. But you're not given many here. So there's a feeling of I'm not being given what I want or need.

No, of course not. Because to find yourself nothing ultimately needs to be added. The adding to works well on the level of your life situation.

There you can play around with learning new things. It's fine to do. Explore new countries.

Buy this or that. It's like this is beautiful. Without looking for yourself in it, that's beautiful.

So on that level, yes, adding to yourself is fine. Exploring new things. But if you're looking for some permanent satisfaction peace in that, it cannot be found there.

If you're looking for yourself, you won't find yourself there. It will always be that, hmm, what now? So we realize here that to be who you are in your essence, which has nothing to do with the story of me, you do not need more of anything.

You mean I'm enough already? This can't be. Look at the mess I'm in, my life situation.

Look at my debts, or whatever. Look at my investments, they've all plunged. Look at this, look at that.

It can't be. Well, you're asking me then to look at your life situation. What about your life?

Life? What life? Here.

Now. Can you feel the life that you are? Can you feel the aliveness?

This is one entry point. In the inner body. Or do you only dwell up there in your head?

If you do, you will notice as you sit here, you get more and more restless. If you're only up here because you cannot be only up here and absorb what is being said here. So you become more restless and begin to twitch without even knowing it, because you're not in the body.

And then you look at your watch. Time. Time.

What's the time? How much longer? What's next?

Where do I have to be at five? The exit out of the mind-identified consciousness that is the continuous stream of thinking, very powerful exit point, is to direct attention into the inner body. And for those of you who cannot feel that the body is alive, in the background as a subtle sense of aliveness, a little thing that can help you is hold up your left or right hand, close your eyes, and ask yourself if there's any way you can know whether that hand is still there or not.

I tell this to people who tell me, I cannot feel anything. Okay, then let's see if this is true, that you cannot feel anything. Close your eyes.

Is your right or left hand still there? Now, sometimes people are just in their minds, they say, yes, it's still there because I saw it there a minute ago. But that's not it.

Can you feel that it's still there? Yes, of course you can. You have to direct attention at that moment away from thinking and the attention flows into the hand.

Of course it's there. I can feel it. And if you hold the other hand, it becomes easier to feel that also.

And you can then realize that you can actually bring together the feeling of two hands into a single feeling of hand, hand. And then can you feel your feet in the same way? Do they almost start tingling?

I don't want to make any suggestions, but that is what one feels. There is intense aliveness throughout the body. Can you now enter, if you have found one entry point

into the body, like your hands, it becomes easier to begin to feel the other parts of the body, not perhaps as strongly as hand.

And then to feel the entire energy field of body as a single feeling, sensing in the background as you sit here. So some of your attention is out of the words, auditory perception, and some of your attention is in the inner aliveness that you feel. You are now becoming present.

You are now rooted, becoming rooted in yourself, in your very being, instead of living in the stream of thinking that is totally conditioned by the past, out of which nothing new ever comes. It's a circle. It goes round and round.

That's why in ancient cultures they talk of the vicious circle of existence. It's a very concrete thing. Stepping out of that, you do not become stupid.

To be identified with that is stupidity. No matter how much knowledge you have accumulated, if you are identified, which means every thought draws in your attention completely, that is stupid, no matter how knowledgeable you are. And you will put it to stupid ends.

You will put your intelligence to stupid ends. This is what the whole world does. Look what it does with the great inventions.

Splitting the atom requires intelligence. Building an atom bomb is stupidity. Building a chainsaw requires great intelligence.

Cutting down all the ancient forests with it requires great stupidity. If you cannot get out of that conditioned thoughts, stream of thinking, you remain ultimately stupid, dysfunctional. There is enormous intelligence that lives inside your body, far greater than the human mind could ever even understand, let alone imitate.

How could the human mind run all the thousands of functions and coordinate them of the body? Every cell embodies intelligence. The one consciousness taking temporary form as that cell, as that organ.

So people say, how do I contact the greater intelligence? How do I find God? And then they look, they think, okay, if I'm I have to work hard and then at some point in the future perhaps I will find himself, herself, myself, however they conceive it.

But that's not where it is. The entry point into the greater intelligence that is beyond the human mind, that pervades the entire universe, that expresses itself here as this beautiful flower, takes form as that, unproblematic. The flower has no problems.

I wonder what's going to happen to me tomorrow. It is there in all its beauty, an unproblematic full expression of that. So this, the same intelligence dwells here.

You can contact it. There's a saying in the, I believe it's the Koran or an associated book, God is closer to you than your jugular vein. And another saying, God is closer to you than hands and feet.

God is closer to you than hands and feet. Now how is that possible? Because hands and feet are so close.

What can be even closer than hands and feet? The inner of that. So if you can sit here and dwell, be rooted in your inner energy field, at the same time you have exited the continuous stream of thinking to a large extent.

Because you can either have your consciousness being consumed by thinking, or you can have your consciousness in here, in the body. So most people's lives are consumed by their mind. It burns up their life energy uselessly.

You lie in bed, you worry, you travel to work, you worry, you think, should, shouldn't have, what if, and so on. All going around in circles. If you could exit, even for a few minutes, and find stillness, because that is the entry point into inner stillness, when you leave identification with a conditioned mind.

Now the conditioned mind will tell you, don't go there, because you won't know what's going on anymore. You will lose your mind. Not true.

It is only if you are connected with that, that you can use your mind in a fresh, creative, and constructive way. So if you can sit here and feel, yes, I am alive, feel it in the background, so to speak, and at the same time you can listen. There is an aliveness here.

You are getting closer to who you are than you ever are when you are identified with the story of me. You are stepping out of the story, deriving your sense of self from telling yourself, dwelling mentally, continuously on your life situation, which exists in time. Not in the now.

I am not denying the existence of time on its own level, or the existence of your life situation, but there is something more powerful that people haven't discovered. Yet, it's the only place where the new, where true power can come into your life. You have to access this tiny thing that to the mind doesn't even exist now.

And the inner body is a powerful anchor for accessing now. You then realize you can sit here without needing to interpret this moment in any way. It is as it is.

Because otherwise, interpretation of what happens to you throughout life is compulsive when you are identified with a compulsive thinking mind. Any situation you go into, you will immediately label it out of your past experience. Any person you meet, you will immediately label according to your past conditioning.

So, you go through life carrying a screen of conceptualization, which is your thought processes and emotions associated with your thought processes. Wherever you go, you judge immediately, compulsively. That's how it is.

Immediately, you say, this is how it is. Some people do it more than others. So, you are surrounded by that screen, inhabiting a conceptualized reality, which is all conditioned by the past.

And then you put labels, mental labels, which are concepts, onto other people. You formulate concepts about who they are. You take a tiny segment out of their behavior, which is another form of conditioning, which comes out of them, and then say, this is who he is, this is who she is.

That's what it does. Or you do it to a group of people. You conceptualize a group of people, call them this or that.

Immediately, you cannot sense their aliveness anymore. You cannot sense that here is a feeling, alive, divine, ultimately human being. You cannot sense that anymore.

All you can see is your concept of that human being or that group of people. This is how a person can commit acts of great violence against a group of people that they have conceptualized in the head. Made already lifeless, so to speak.

And then, these are not humans anymore. You can put a bomb there. You've killed them already in your mind.

You've conceptualized them already. That's how you can see how what on a personal level is simply a screen that makes your life heavy and difficult, that imposes stories on everything that happens to you. On a collective level, it lies also at the root of the dysfunction, the collective dysfunction in humanity.

What are we doing to ourselves and to others? So where the root then is to be identified with the conditioned thinking. The solution is to step out of conditioned thinking.

And the mind says, Oh, you can't possibly do that. Who is talking? Conditioned thinking.

Feeling the body? No, you can't. I can't feel the body right now because I've got too much on my mind.

Who is talking? The mind. So the mind will tell you also when you lie awake in bed, you need to think about this now.

If you don't think about this now, it will all collapse. It's four o'clock in the morning. There's nothing you can do.

You are tortured by your own mind. The body believes that every thought that you have

is a reality. Every fearful thought that you have, that you're actually in some fearful situation.

So the body is continuously contracted and says, Oh no, dreadful things are happening right now. Your energy field gets disrupted. Energy doesn't flow freely anymore.

And then do that for a few years. What that does to your body? Oh, this goes wrong here, that goes wrong there.

Nothing is flowing anymore. So there you are in bed. Something in the head is telling you that you need to think about this now.

No, I don't. There's no action I can take at this moment. I've thought about it already for 20 hours.

And it is my choice at this moment not to think. It is my choice to feel the aliveness that I am. And then the mind says, No, you can't do that now.

Can you identify the thinker and not confuse the thinker with who you are? If you are not the thinker, who are you? Or rather, the thinker asks, Well, if I'm not the thinker, who am I?

When you realize that there's a stream of thinking going through your head, you take one step back internally from the thinking. And when you're in the body, that's easier, of course. You take one step back and there are the thoughts.

And you can choose at that moment that you do not want to think. What for? Many situations in life would be far more beautiful if you were not imposing interpretations on them.

Especially relationships. We may come to that. But at the moment we are in bed at 4 o'clock in the morning.

So the mind will usually tell you sometimes it says, I have no time to go into the body. No time. I have too much to think about.

It's a lie. But you have to see it as a lie. It is.

You have to recognize it is a conditioned mind pattern. The mind doesn't want you to go into the body. And then you go into the body.

You have stepped out. You realize more. Once you are in the body, you realize a dimension of yourself that is not the stream of thinking.

An aliveness. I am that aliveness. That is a thought.

But I'm translating into the thought what is ultimately, when you sense it, it's not a

thought. You feel alive. Before you did not feel alive.

Humans that go through the world with that conceptualized reality are not truly, they do not truly feel alive. They need a substitute life. They need continuous stimulus to give them a feeling of that they are still a little bit alive.

They need drama in relationships just to have that excitement. Yes, I'm still alive. We are fighting.

The relationship must still be real. Children at an early age, children, very young children, are connected with the aliveness that they are until concepts come into the head. And in this modern civilization, they very quickly get out of their body and the moment, especially they start using the mass produced screen, electronic screen gadgets, they are totally out of concept and stimulus, mental stimulus and become addicted to that to feel alive.

They can't feel the life that they are anymore. They cannot live without stimulus anymore. It's a mad world.

The most beautiful thing in life, the delight of life, the delight of being that plants can feel, although we cannot get into plants in that way with animals, we can see it a little bit more when you watch a bird that sings, that flies from one branch to another, when you watch an eagle in flight for an hour without moving the wings, any animal, a cat purring, they are delighting in being alive. And I'm sure this flower delights in being alive in its own way, not the same consciousness as the human. Basically, yes, the same one consciousness, but a different expression of that.

But somehow everything natural is still connected with the delight of being. It is rooted in being. Humans, of course, are also rooted in being, but they don't know it anymore.

That's why in the power of now it says at the beginning, the beggar is sitting on a box of gold, but has never looked inside. Has always been begging for just a coin, little coins here and there. And this is what humans, human existence has come to.

They have lost the delight of life. And we are returning to that. The beauty is when you're returning to something, you go to a deeper level than when you lost it.

And it is not just the delight of life. There is peace in there. There is also you are touching the source of all creativity, intuition, realization.

True intelligence is there when you step out of the conditioned stream of thinking without losing consciousness. Because that is another way that some humans attempt to do. They realize obscurely that they cannot live with this dreadful torture in their head anymore.

So they go to drinks. One drink. Feel a little bit better.

Another drink. Much better. Why are they feeling better?

The mind slows down a bit. They're stepping out. They're coming a little bit free of the mental torture.

And the third drink, then you feel really great. And you start feeling more alive. And then another one.

And another. And another. And you're going towards unconsciousness or sleep.

So it gives you a temporary reprieve, a temporary aliveness. Because you're getting out of mind. But you are going towards unconsciousness.

You are sinking below the level of thought. At first it's beautiful because even that is better than the torture of the mind. And then if you went any further, eventually you would end up in the realm of minerals.

And you would become as peaceful as a stone. Now a stone, too, has some aliveness in it, but it is a very distant aliveness. A stone, too, is an expression of consciousness in this.

It is a pulsating energy field. If you could see it on a molecular level, you would see that the stone, too, is a being, an expression of the one consciousness, and a very peaceful one. Plants are very peaceful compared to humans, but a little bit less peaceful than stones.

Animals are very sane, most of them, compared to humans. They're not destroying the planet, for a start. They're not making themselves unhappy.

They don't inhabit a problematic reality. What about me? However, it is not for us humans to go back.

We are not going back from thought into unconsciousness. If I asked you, would you, if you wanted peace, inner peace, let's say you live a tortured life, like this is quite normal. It's just a degree of intensity.

You lead a tortured life. I ask you, you can now choose. You can become a happy animal, a happy cow.

Cows are quite happy, not the cows that are badly, despicably treated by humans in factory farms, another aspect of the insanity of humanity, but a cow that is alone living in Switzerland on the hills. And they look quite happy. And they even put up with a silly bell they ring around their necks.

They look quite happy when you look at them. It's actually a contemplation. You look at that cow and go beautiful, beautiful.

And yet, and yet, if you could choose to become a happy cow or remain as a tortured, unhappy human being, you would probably choose to remain a tortured, unhappy human being. Unless you are so unhappy and so tortured that you would do anything whatsoever, including suicide, to get out of that. In which case you are so fed up with suffering that it would be easy for you now to step out of that once and for all identification with that limited, absurdly limited, sense of self.

We are not going back to that it's beautiful for plants to be plants, for an animal to be an animal, or a stone to be a stone. They are beautiful expressions of life. Our way is the way beyond the stage of mind, of thought, of deriving your sense of self from that.

Then, thinking can still happen, but it no longer has the capacity to make you unhappy. Thinking can then become a very powerful tool for creating whatever you need to create on the level of form. And thinking will become extremely empowered when it's no longer invested with a sense of self.

When your self is no longer in thought, then truly will you be able to use thought beautifully and powerfully. If humans could immediately create anything with thought that they wanted now in their egoic state, the world would be in an even greater mess than it is now. Ultimately, yes, thought is very powerful to create, but that is not the solution to anybody's dilemma.

If now I gave you all the power in the world to create any situation you like in your life, it would not help you. Because whatever situation you create, you walk into with the same mind structures. So the same mind structures will then create the same circumstances, the same drama.

Instead of in a little house, it's a drama in the mansion, the big mansion. Instead of nobody knowing about it, they might write about your drama in the papers. But it's not more significant, really, than anybody else's drama.

If you were transported to paradise, an island in the Pacific, beautiful everything, at first it would be wonderful, but then as you're not connected with a deeper sense of aliveness, after a few weeks or months, you would get bored. Intolerably, intolerable boredom would arise, and restlessness. No drama, nothing is going on.

Exit point, body. Exiting the conditioned head, noise in the head. Stay there, feel it, another exit point, become more conscious of this moment, and you may have heard the New Age saying that whatever happens to you, you have chosen it.

I'm not telling you this, though, because that is something you can argue with, and many people would. They say, there's no way I would have chosen this. No way, you're

completely wrong.

I wanted something totally different. Okay, that may be true. So I'm not saying that you have chosen whatever happens to you, or whatever situation you're in at this moment.

But you can live as if you had chosen whatever happens at this moment. First of all, you can see nothing that happens is isolated from the totality. Everything is connected with everything else.

There is no isolated event ever in your life. When you see that, you see that whatever happens has a certain inevitability to it. And that is called the inevitability of is.

It is. Now this is the most, you cannot argue with that little word. Is.

What's happening right now? Whatever form this moment takes, it is as it is right now. That statement is always true.

And if you argue internally with the incontrovertible fact of is, you're very unhappy. You make yourself very unhappy. And you make others automatically also unhappy.

There's nobody who makes themselves unhappy who don't make others around them unhappy also. So here we have the exit point is become aware of the form that this moment, the only moment there ever is. The form that it takes right now, that changes continuously.

But are you going through life resisting, resenting, denying the form that this moment takes? Here I am waiting in line and I've been standing here for an hour and a half and it's not moving. How can they be so stupid?

I'm going to write letters and you write the letters of complaint in your head. There's nothing wrong with letters of complaint but you're writing them in your head now. You're not actually writing them.

And as these thought structures arise, there's enormous contraction, enormous suffering really, but it's not recognized as suffering. Is, and I'm taking an easy situation, just a long waiting period to recognize that the suchness, another word that the Buddha used, the suchness of this moment is always already as it is. And instead of resisting it internally, instead of denying it by mentally projecting yourself away from it into some more fulfilling future moment that isn't here, or looking for the future moment that's going to be more fulfilling than this one.

And if you're looking, you get up into thought because it's thought that does it. You leave your body, you leave the aliveness of now and you move into identification with thought. And the thought denies or rejects what is.

It criticizes it, it says this shouldn't be, or I hope it's over soon. I hope this moment is

over soon. Is a deep-seated mind habit in humans is not usually recognized because it's unconscious, but you can see how dysfunctional it is if now we make it conscious.

People living in such a way, they, if you were saying, how often would you say during the course of a day, I hope this moment is over soon. If you uttered that consciously, you would maybe utter it a hundred times a day. And what are you saying if we now re-translate that phrase, and what you're saying is, I hope life is over soon.

Because this moment is life. Or you're saying, I hope to find life eventually. I hope to feel truly alive eventually.

I hope a moment will come when I feel that, when I find life. Does it ever come when you're trapped in that mind pattern? A few times, many times, the delusion of having found that moment will come occasionally.

It's called falling in love, winning a million dollars, getting a great job, getting married, going on vacation. The delusion that now you have found a moment that is good. And before you know it, it's gone again.

Or even in the middle of it, you're walking along the beach on your vacation that you dreamt about for several months, and you're thinking, next week I'll be back in the office. When really it doesn't matter whether you're on the beach or the office, to feel the life that you are. So the life is concealed in now.

So the first thing is to detect in yourself when you're telling the present moment that you don't want it. The only moment there ever is and you don't want it. The only time there ever is and you're saying, get out of my way.

I'm on my way somewhere else. If you stop people here in this city or any other big city that are running around like excited little, getting to the next thing. If you stopped anybody and asked them where are they going, they would give you their destination.

It's all very important, but everybody would be going towards the future. They would all be saying, I'm going to a future moment that's more important than this one. If you really ask them, okay, compare the importance of where you are now to the importance of where you want to get.

They would say, okay, where I want to get to is more important than now. Always. And the whole civilization lives like that and it seems to make sense.

Because, you see, confirmed on television that everybody lives like that. It must be okay. And yet, it's dysfunctional.

And then people ask, would I still be effective? What would I do if I accepted the now? Would I not become a passive doormat that says, do to me whatever you like?

No. The present moment is accepted in its is-ness. That means you face fully the form that this moment takes.

You welcome it. You allow it. If you can't welcome it, at least you can say, there you are.

There you are. There it is. This is the form that this moment takes.

There's my car. Somebody has smashed the windscreen. A little thing that could cause a little unhappiness.

But the mechanism of little and big is all the same. You get back to the car. Somebody smashed the windscreen.

It is already as it is. Nothing, you could add nothing to it that would improve it through any reaction. So that brings and you're beginning to approach reality, which is now this is vital.

You bring to it a state of alert presence. And in that alert presence you are looking actually or metaphorically attention flows from you onto the situation. It may be a challenge.

It may be something that requires action. It may be something that requires immediate action. And you look.

Allow this moment to be windscreen smashed. Okay. Raining, car getting wet inside.

What can I do?

[Speaker 2] (3:37:35 - 3:37:35)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (3:37:36 - 5:08:01)

You immediately out of the acceptance, right action arises. Out of rejection of what is action will also arise. But it is more likely to be not quite right for that situation because it's tainted with a lot of denial and rejection and negativity.

And then you're on the phone and you're in a very bad mood and you're trying to get somebody to repair the car and they can hear how bad your mood is and they don't want to do it because you're not nice. And they can... The universe doesn't respond very well when you are denying what is.

You don't get a good response. So you're making, when you make this moment into an enemy, you're making reality, the universe into an enemy. To see the power that can come through you when you accept the now in whatever form it comes because you realize the futility of saying no to it.

Saying no to life. And if something dreadful should be happening at this moment then your acceptance needs to be deeper. Something dreadful may be happening right in front of you or to you.

Surrender is required. Surrender to what is at this moment. And people in the most dreadful situations, we have reports of people who have suffered in the most dreadful circumstances or situations.

Illness. Prison camp. Complete loss of everything in their lives.

All at once. And some of them, some of them were in hell and remained in that state until they died. Others were forced through suffering out of the state of resistance.

They couldn't stand the suffering anymore. They couldn't stand themselves anymore. They couldn't stand the resistance anymore.

It became unbearable. So a moment came, and they never perhaps read any book about it, never heard any spiritual teaching. A moment came when internally they no longer resisted the is-ness of this moment.

There was acceptance. And suddenly, they later talked about it, an enormous amount of peace was suddenly there. An enormous amount of aliveness in the midst of hell, in some cases.

Suddenly a serenity, a peace, and they didn't understand why. What happened? What happened was the yes, the inner yes to what is.

And very often, very problematic life situation changed suddenly when they offered no resistance. Because when you offer no resistance to life, which is now, life begins to work for you. You open the gates to the greater intelligence of which you are a part, to come through.

So something can come through that is more intelligent than the limited human mind. And this comes into the world as right action, spontaneous right action. Because some situations, they need to be accepted, but action may also be necessary.

Other situations, you cannot act for the time being, and all you can do is, this is how it is right now. And you're free of suffering. I'm in prison.

These are bars. Here I am. The mind will say, ten more years you have to do.

But you are sitting there just at this moment. I'm getting many letters, more and more letters from people in prison, whose life has changed dramatically. Now what does that mean?

When you accept the now, your mind will always try to draw this moment and make it

part of the story of me. So if they put you in prison, rightly or wrongly, your mind would draw that and you would be interpreting this as this is where they have put me. This is what society has done to me.

This has happened because of my parents. This has happened. You have a story associated with it that tells you the story of who you are, and it's very painful.

This is me. People cannot, people usually confuse the story with which they interpret this moment with the simplicity of what's actually happening. So in the prison cell, the simplicity of this moment is body sitting on chair, feeling the aliveness inside and looking around at the walls, but there too there is an aliveness.

You see a little bit of sky perhaps through the window. Some people are making noise. You feel you're getting underneath the surface appearance of this moment, which doesn't look so good perhaps, to a deeper aliveness.

And as you look at the walls and the bars on the windows, you let go of the story and feel the simple aliveness of this moment. You're perceiving the wall and the bars and the sky beyond and you're aware of yourself as that which perceives not the story, the consciousness. And in any situation you will notice there's a story and there's the simplicity of this moment.

I gave a few examples in the book Stillness Speaks. There's the story what a miserable day. There's the simplicity of this moment.

It is raining. There's the story. He didn't have the decency to return my call.

It's a story that you're telling yourself in the service of being right, which is a mental thing. And when you can be right, you feel you're a bit more yourself. It's dysfunctional, but that's how the egoic mind structures work.

He didn't have the decency to even return my calls. And then you can elaborate on the story of who he is. Or you can see the simplicity of this.

He didn't call. No, he didn't call. No.

That's what it is. The phone is not ringing. Little phrases are little stories, but for most people the little stories always then becomes elaborated, and they go through life with stories.

She let me down. She did something to me. What happened?

I was there and she wasn't there. Oh, is that all? Yes.

So in any moment, can you extract the simplicity of this moment, the singularity of this, without confusing it with a mental story that you superimpose on the simplicity of this

moment? That is a story of me about this and they, what they did, and usually in the story you are right. And usually in the story either another person or a situation, of course, has to be wrong.

It doesn't matter whether you make a situation wrong or a person wrong, as long as you can be right. Why is it so satisfying to be right? Because it strengthens the mind-made sense of self.

You feel for a moment if I can be right, if I can only complain enough about something or someone, the more I complain, the more I feel more strongly my sense of identity. It's an illusion, it's an illusory sense of self and it's a suffering sense of self, but to the ego it loves that suffering. It doesn't even know that it's suffering when it's complaining.

It feels good to complain, I'm really getting into it. And the more I complain, the more strongly I get the me and the not me. The stronger the separation gets between the imaginary mind-made separation between me and the rest of the universe.

And that goes so far as to become for many people almost a sense that the entire universe is basically out to get them. The entire universe is basically considered as hostile and you need to defend yourself continuously from it. They're out to get me.

You may have heard the famous phrase just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not after you. And so that's what the dysfunction feels, what built into the conditioned thought structures, the need to blame is continuously there, coupled with the need to be right. And all those are stories that are imposed that cover up the simplicity of this moment.

So mentally you cover up what could be very, very simple. And that is all the Zen stories that you may have heard. Zen is there for you to discover the simplicity of just this.

Because that's all there is. Do not confuse this moment with a story that the mind imposes on it. And then you get underneath the surface appearance of this moment and you feel a power that before was not there, available to you, when you allow the form that this moment takes to be without imposing interpretations.

And if interpretations come habitually, automatically, it will be easier for you now to recognize them as just interpretations, just stories. When the complainer comes into your head, maybe later today, maybe as you sit here, the habitual mental habit of complaining, then you can discover that Oh! And this is an enormously beautiful thing when you can discover the complaining voice in your head as not yourself, but simply thoughts.

It's the complaining voice in the head. Whereas before you thought that was me, that was I. You were the complainer, identified completely.

So a space of freedom arises. Ah! You're stepping out of conditioned thought.

Thousands and thousands of years of collectively conditioned mind structures. And the more you step out, the more alive you feel. And then every moment that you totally face, because you say yes to it, there's an enormous power that flows through you when you look this moment straight in the face.

No matter what it is. Even if you get home and your house has collapsed. And you look, there it is.

That was my house once. And what can you do? It already is.

It is. Oh! And in any situation that you completely allow, you will find a miracle.

Something emerges out of that situation that looked on the surface very negative. When you completely allow it, something else will emerge out of it that you could never have thought of, that will be better in one way or another. Something will emerge.

There's a grace hiding in every moment in life. The grace is hiding no matter what form this moment takes, even if it looks dreadful. But you can never know it if you don't bring the allowing to it.

And some of you here have already experienced it here and there. You were confronted with something that you would never have chosen. An illness, deep loss of possessions, or relationship, or status in society, or reputation, or whatever.

You would never have chosen it, and yet it somehow drove you into an acceptance. At some point you said yes to what is. Not the entire situation.

Again, not the story. You never say yes to. I have to say yes to the fact that I'm totally ruined now.

What story is that? You can't say yes to that. I have to say yes to the fact that everything has been totally useless in my life.

30 years of work for nothing. My wife has left me. Everything has fallen to pieces.

I have to accept that. No! That's the story.

You can't accept stories like that, because the story itself is the resistance. All you accept is just this moment. Here I am sitting on a park bench.

Here I am. You look. Two dollars in my pocket.

Two, one, two. And then you look. There's breathing.

The body is alive. Trees. And you look.

And you're alert. And the sky. There's a field of alert presence that even flows into your sense perceptions.

And then, if little thoughts arise, they would be thoughts like this moment is good. It feels good to be alive. You are present in this moment.

For a while, you relinquished the story, which is complicated, which is to do with the stock market, divorce attorneys, it's to do with your health situation, it's to do with loss, it's to do with all the things that have happened in your life, your life situation, that you could also be sitting on that bench, totally burdened with that. And your face would look very different from one situation to the other. One situation is a compulsive telling yourself your story.

And if anybody should be unlucky enough to sit next to you on the bench, you maybe start telling them to get some feedback of, yes, you're right to be truly unlucky, and you should really be suffering, you're right to be happy. Of all the right to be unhappy, that's what you would love to hear. And yet, there's nobody there.

So you have to tell it to yourself. What's going to happen now, it's just no point in going on. Can you see how burdened you are, what a burden you are carrying with that, if you can't step out of that?

And the thought structures might even be telling you that you're getting, maybe, if you think hard enough about your unhappy story, you'll find some solution. You won't. You will find a solution only if you step out of it, into the aliveness of now.

And that requires a shift from mind identification to alertness. The first thing is to enter the body. There you are.

Already parts of the story fall away, because you cannot hold that at the same time as you can feel the body. Then, the alertness rises. Alertness means conscious awareness.

Before, your conscious awareness was eaten up by compulsive thinking, like a car that's uselessly burning up gas. You keep your foot on the accelerator, the car is in neutral, and for hours and hours, the engine of the car goes vroom, vroom, vroom. It wears out very quickly, and it uses up a lot of gas.

So, your thoughts absorb your consciousness and make it into more thoughts. They gobble up your aliveness, proliferating thoughts. If you could see, psychically, you could probably see dark clouds emanating from your head, and then a dark cloud hanging over your head, and you can step out of that by entering the body and realizing what is the reality of this moment.

Story begins to fall away, and you single out this instant that the Course in Miracles calls the Holy Instant, because it's the only place where holiness or sacredness can be found,

and your attention rises. It's partly in the body, and partly on your external sense perceptions, which also begin to be alive and beautiful, because you're aware now of what you see, and what arises is a field. I'm not just speaking about this.

As I speak, see if that can be your reality at this moment. And what replaces the story-based sense of self is an alert presence. That alert presence we could call awareness or consciousness, and it is it emanates from the one that it is better not to name, the source of all life.

It comes from that. It is the light of the one that is consciousness, like the light of the sun is still part of the sun. Consciousness, the one consciousness that you are, before it becomes a thought, before it becomes a world, that emanates directly.

It replaces thought, and it is in that you are now connected with the one intelligence that manifests as billions of things that come and go. You're connected with that. And the moment you connect with that, it becomes, it wants to help you.

It is ultimately not separate from who you are. It's just that you're becoming aligned with life. The delusion of being a separate little me that has to protect itself from the world goes.

You become aligned with life, and as such, life now is no longer perceived as hostile. It actually, you will, this is suddenly the place where miracles and coincidences come into your life, that before, couldn't, because you were saying no to life continuously. Life couldn't help you.

It's like the sun. You're putting a hood over your head and it's like saying, no, the sun is shining, but you're pulling this over your head. You don't see it.

Take that off. To the sun it doesn't matter. And suddenly you find you're sitting on this bench, and you've stepped out of the story, and aliveness arises, and you actually sense what we could also call the I am.

That is not the I that is usually meant when you tell your story. Usually when you say I, you want to know who I am, what I do for a living. You want to hear the story of I, not that I, a deeper sense of beingness, or presence that's who you are.

You get in touch with that. That is, that usually gets mixed up with the story, the sense of beingness or presence. It's mistaken for that.

But if you can feel that directly as presence, your own beingness, before thought arises, even if fragments of thoughts come, it's fine. And eventually when you need to use your mind, it works beautifully. But right now, here on this park bench, where the story would be telling me that my life has gone to pieces, well, it hasn't really.

There's intense aliveness here, the aliveness that I am. And that attracts whatever it is that you need. Suddenly, somebody sits next to you and starts talking because he wants to know why you look so alive and so peaceful.

And before you know it, he's offering you a million dollars to invest. So you can try again. If your first investment business collapsed, helpful things come in from within as realizations, from without as events.

Coincidences tend to happen more and more that you cannot explain. So the simple thing for this to happen is make room for this moment. Space for this moment.

Body, allowing this moment to be as it is. And what has come in now, we've already, as we were talking, a third exit point out of mind and an entry point into presence, we already touched on this, is sense perceptions. Bringing conscious awareness to what you see now, what you hear now.

Bringing an alertness to your sense perceptions is another exit point from the mind-identified state. Because when you become alert and truly see something, you're not interpreting it. Ah!

Oh! And you may catch yourself whenever you first look upon something, your field of vision moves from here to there. Something enters your field of vision.

A flower, a chair, the first moment or two, that's a conventional way of putting it, you look at it, there's a little space in which the perception arises and you haven't mentally called it anything or made it part of your story. There's a space of alert, aware stillness whenever you first look upon something. If you become aware of that, it will extend.

And then comes a depth into your sense perceptions that wasn't there before. A deepening. The depth is you become aware of the awareness through which you perceive.

The stillness through which you perceive. The consciousness is all one thing. The consciousness through which you perceive the world.

There's the perception and you sense yourself as the consciousness in which the perception happens. That is beautiful and powerful when you can go through life as that field of intelligence. When you look upon things and above all look upon other human beings.

Bring that into relationships. Instead of meeting people with mental concepts, giving them a conceptual reality, allow them to be as they are at this moment and look and listen in and through still, aware presence. That is also love.

Whenever you look upon something and do not label it mentally, there's an allowing.

Allow that human being to be there. Give them attention.

There's a flow of attention. And in that you are not making the other human being into other. The separation that comes from identifying with conceptual thinking falls away.

And without that sense of separation from you and between you and others and you and the rest of the universe, there's now the beginning of a realization of oneness of yourself with all other life forms. Before you couldn't know that because you conceptualized every other life form. You put a label on everything that creates the barrier.

So you... And the amazing thing is this is how you suddenly become very deep and very intelligent and you move about life being not just the little person. The little person becomes just a surface phenomenon which is really what it is, including your life story.

Yes, it's still there but no longer absorbs your identity. That is much deeper. You are a field of intelligence, a field of consciousness that's going through life.

A person also but on a deeper level. You are greater than the person you thought you were. Far deeper, far greater.

And that flows even into your life situation, even into the circumstances of your life and they tend to unfold more harmoniously as this unconditioned consciousness that you are comes through, shines through. Humans are ready for this now. There is an evolutionary impulse in the universe that wants this shift in human consciousness to happen.

The planet desperately needs this shift in human consciousness to happen because if it doesn't, humans will destroy the planet very soon if it does not happen. So there is now a certain urgency. This is why many humans feel this impulse, this change happening.

They are ready to listen to this message. They come to a speaker like this speaker who is not a stage personality, who doesn't jump up and down, does no show. He just sits there and talks almost monotonously and yet people come and recognize something.

They recognize something that deep down they already knew. And as you sit here, it comes forth. It gets drawn out of you more quickly, that level of consciousness.

We will take a little break now. That looks like time. This is clock time and we will meet in 25 minutes and look at one of the greatest obstacles for most people to presence that is the accumulated pain from the past that humans carry inside.

Thank you. We've been speaking about the form that this moment takes that implies that there is something else there apart from what happens. Because what happens at any moment, the one moment which takes different forms, is the form that this one moment takes which is confused usually with what that moment is.

So people believe there are thousands of moments in every day because different things

happen every day in people's lives. And yet, if you look more deeply, life is always this moment. There's never not this moment.

So how can there be thousands of moments if there's only this moment ever? So there must be something not quite right here. Either one is true or the other is true.

And of course the truth is the now is not what happens. It's usually mistaken for what happens. All people see is the event that happens.

What they do not know, what they are not conscious of is the now itself. What is that? Is there a now apart from that which happens in the now in a way?

Yes. Not as separate things. They interpenetrate the event and space.

Because now is the space in which something happens. What does that mean? Rather than giving more pointers or more concepts, I'd like to demonstrate it directly with a sound.

These are Tibetan bells. I'll ring them perhaps two or three times, or four, who knows. And each time we will listen to it in a different way.

The first time I ring this bell, I just ask you to listen to the sound that lingers for a while and then gradually dissolves. Just listen to it alertly. See if there's enough alertness in you so that you can follow the sound as it travels on its journey into non-existence.

So to follow the sound with your attention as it travels into non-existence slowly, be there as the alert perceiver of the sound. If you're not alert, you'll drift off into thinking instead. Now see if you can listen to the sound not just through the ears.

Feel that your entire body you need to be in there is listening to the sound as the sound happens. Listen with every cell of the body. Be receptive to the sound with every cell of the body.

For the sound to be there two things are needed. The sound and the space of now or the consciousness in which the sound appears and disappears. Who is that?

You. The consciousness in which the sound disappears, first appears and then dissolves. So we have two ingredients.

The first is concrete. Something arises. The second ingredient is not easy to grasp or hold because it is only an open space.

It is the same space that when you enter the inner body the space of consciousness that permeates every cell of the body, the consciousness that you are that temporarily takes on form as the body and in the external world, temporarily consciousness takes on billions, millions of forms. In this case we are reducing it to only the sound of the bell so

that we can realize that it is possible, as we ring the bell again, to be conscious as you listen of the sound and of yourself as the consciousness in which the sound happens. We could also call it the still space in which the sound arises and then disappears.

So as you listen now, not only listen to the sound, but be aware of the field of awareness itself, and that is who you are. So be aware of the deepest I am, which is the field of awareness the essence of who you are, consciousness itself. Be aware of that, not as a concrete object but as the space without which there would be no sound.

You may have heard the famous riddle, if a tree falls in the forest does it make a sound if there is nobody there to hear it? And of course the answer is no. If a tree falls in the forest and nobody perceives it, sound doesn't happen.

Sound needs an ear and it needs a perceiving consciousness. Now there is the sound of the bell and there is that which knows that there is the sound that which makes the listening possible, the space the now, yourself the I and when the sound has died down, died we could say, every form dies sooner or later, and this sound form doesn't last for too long it has died and then what remains is just a space a beingness a presence, an awareness that is not, you cannot really conceptualize it very easily, you can't really talk about it, and yet we do you are using little pointers there is a spaciousness an aware presence and then something else arises, words come externally and there is a spaciousness can you be aware of yourself as the field of awareness in which you are perceiving this room in which you are perceiving visually and through your ears the reality of this room, so that there is not only that which arises in this reality that you are aware of, and most people are identified with or react against there is always some identification can you be aware of something deeper, at any moment in your life there is always something deeper than that which is happening in the moment, and that something deeper is yourself and yourself is very deep indeed there is an enormous depth to it there is an enormous realm of peace to it it's because it is being itself, beyond the little person and even now as you listen to these words, can you be aware of yourself not as the walking story line but as of your deeper aware presence which is felt throughout the body just a presence a beingness I am, that's all one could say, it is a feeling of who you truly are, even if you forgot most of your story or it changed dramatically from being a pauper suddenly you are a millionaire and everything is changed externally and yet, if you go a little deeper, the sense of presence or beingness doesn't change, it doesn't matter what the externals, if you go deep and that is the now that is the space of now the timeless dimension of consciousness the timeless dimension of who you are, beyond the things that happen in your life, which is that, life situation past, future, story yes, that continues to exist for a while but if you are lost in that dimension, then you are lost in the world completely lost in the world of things and in the world of thoughts lost in your mind lost, everything absorbs your attention totally and you identify and react and there is no you don't feel any ground under your feet just the world pulls you this way and that way and it brings up one problem after another just as

you sort this little area in your life out, something else collapses behind you that's what the world does it's unstable the world of form is not stable, it's not in the nature of form it looks stable, you can look at huge buildings or corporations or a few years ago the communist government in Russia looked like the thing that would last, that was so immobile communist government and all the people that represented it were totally stable, nothing is ever going to change it wasn't, it dissolved where is it, it's gone oh, buildings gigantic buildings can collapse as we know through an act of nature or through human madness they looked so stable the human body can go from one day to the next gone situations if the surface reality looks so solid physicists know that there's nothing solid it just looks that way if you travel to India you sometimes realize that the world around you is not so solid the illusion of solidity is less there you realize things are could go wrong at any moment they don't go as planned whatever plans you make it's not going to work and that's wonderful you see also the instability of the human form, you see it more clearly in India because all old people and sick people and mad people are shut away in the west, whereas there they're mostly in the street and the reality it's staring you in the face the reality of human existence it's not different really from the reality of human existence it is not stable the world of form is not stable if you expect stability you hang your identity onto some form and then you suffer because it will go and then your identity is left dangling from nowhere so the liberation from that is liberation from being entangled with your sense of identity in forms forms are beautiful the forms of life, you play with them they come, they go situations, people, relationships these objects come go, nothing lasts that long and so deep down everybody knows that on the one hand they hope that eventually they'll accumulate enough forms to identify with to complete their sense of self but ultimately, deep down everybody feels this isn't going to last and of course it isn't and this is why underlying human, normal human existence is an enormous amount of fear enormous amount of fear it's not always recognized directly as fear it's nervousness, it's stress it's tension, it's anxiety and really everybody is running around trying to get somewhere they're stressed if you're not stressed these days means there's something wrong with you you're not doing your job properly I saw a cartoon in which the boss asks an employee you are the only person in this office not suffering from a stress-related disease, how come? stress is normal stress is a form of fear it's because that's all you know, the world of form and of course you're in fear and it's so easy to there's something so obvious that is there that is deeper than that and is the essence of your very being and it's there as the deepest sense of being is our presence and it's there as it begins to be there as you enter your body it's there when you don't deny the form that this moment takes or resist it but allow it and there's space allowing means there's space it is there even as you perceive through sensory perception and you're aware not only of the sound but also of the underlying consciousness the underlying presence that you cannot pinpoint it's spacious you can never grasp it and say here it is because it has no form it is the formless life timeless formless one life God, if God has any meaning, true meaning in the deepest sense that is the one timeless, formless life or intelligence the one being that underlies all life or form

and you can perceive visually also just as you perceive the sound as you look upon a flower or a tree or anything man-made there's the perception of it and there's the underlying field of still presence an alertness also is part of that an alert still presence as if if you want to experience it directly without any sense perception one could compare to the state of listening or waiting for something in an alertness to capture something and any gesture to accompany that inner state of alertness would be the raised finger not the raised finger in the sense of I'm telling you what to do the raised finger that says pay attention, be alert know yourself as that alertness itself you are deeper than the person there was a spiritual master who was asked by his student, where did you learn to be so still and alert who taught you enlightenment, because that's what enlightenment is, knowing yourself as that which underlies everything that arises knowing yourself as the space of now, so to speak so they asked how did you, who was your teacher and he said, my teacher was a cat watching a mouse hole I watched the cat watching a mouse hole for a long long time hours and hours and that's how I learned to be in the state of alertness now the cat of course is only interested in the mouse, maybe the cat is not aware of alertness itself or maybe there is such a thing as the enlightenment of cats in any case how does a cat watch the mouse hole like this and that's what the master watched the cat and by watching the cat entered the same state and became conscious of consciousness itself through that this is self-realization this is becoming aware of self the deepest self the deepest I am so when a cat watches the mouse hole the cat does not think how much longer do I have to sit here because it does not have a story about what it's doing why do I when is it coming out I'm not hanging around here much longer in that case the cat would be immersed in thinking and would have a story and it wouldn't look like that it would look like but it just looks, there is no story there is no thought, there is just that and so that works many things in nature can teach you because nature has no mind has no thought to it it's wonderful, anything any tree, any flower can teach you to become still just look at it and continue to look and then you realize there is more to the tree than what you see there is more to the flower than what you see there is an essence there a very still present essence that is beyond the beautiful form the form is beautiful most humans they go into nature, they can be hiking for days never really see because while they are hiking they are thinking if you are lucky they are thinking about what they see but they are labeling it but they are most probably thinking about their investments or the stock market or whatever but if you can go into nature and truly anything natural can connect you with that because it's still it's surrendered to this moment it's deeply connected still with being, the one life it's closer to God than any human one could say, unless that human has returned everything natural therefore is sacred and when you go there in a state of open alert attention you will realize that everything natural has sacredness to it and the moment you realize that every flower in the tree there is more there, no matter how beautiful the form that you see there is also something deeper there is a stillness there is an aliveness there is a sacredness there that cannot be really conceptualized but the moment you realize that you realize it's also in you because if it were not also in you you wouldn't even notice it

it's only because it's also in you that you are able to notice it so it arises as allow nature to free you of the story of the mind, of time that's why it is here, not only does it help is it absolutely vital for the survival, the physical survival of humans, if too much disappears too much of the forest then we won't be breathing anymore and that will be it but in addition to that to being the prerequisite for our physical survival there is something, a deeper reason why nature is so vital to us so let it help you so as you watch you sense a presence, a stillness a peace that emanates and it's also in you and with that, the separation between you and it falls away there is a oneness in that aware space there's the flower or the tree and there's the awareness which is what you are in which the flower or the tree appears and is seen and the awareness and the form that arises in the awareness are one ultimately it is the space that permeates everything and so that frees you from an excessive reliance on the unstable world of form and that also frees you from fear because fear, all that fear is is you put your reliance on something that cannot and will not last and deep down you know it and that's why Jesus said when talking about the things, all things in form, he described as the world where moss and rust consume and thieves break in and steal because that is the destiny of forms, it's to be consumed either it collapses by itself or somebody comes and removes it or removes you from it and he said it, the world the entire world is that so to get entangled in that and seek yourself in it of course you're in continuous tension, fear nervousness and not enough and so the knowing yourself as that which is deeper but not separate from the world of form is freedom liberation from that not that you deny the world of form you could go to another extreme, you could say nothing that I see here is real, some people have that as a belief that arose through the sages in India who went so deeply into the state of beingness, of being the consciousness the space and that became so instead of being in the background as it is to you as this first comes, you're now aware that there's a foreground to your life in which things happen including thoughts and emotions but also external events there is a deeper ground or background to your life which you recognize as still aware presence consciousness, I am I am that I am the vast space of now of consciousness you know yourself as that and that as you go through your life you're aware not only of what happens but also of yourself as the ground as the space in which it happens and that frees you from the forms and it can become so strong it has in some humans it has shifted so that the background sense of presence has become so overwhelming that the world of forms seem to become more and more insignificant and insubstantial so some sages went so deep into that that they said they laughed and said it's all so unreal because compared to what they knew to be the unchanging timeless reality of their being the world of form, yes did look completely insubstantial and unreal like ripples on the surface of a vast sea and every ripple says, I am so and so on the other ripple says my name is such and such and even occasionally a big wave comes and says I am such and such and then they are gone the forms, you know when waves break on the shore of the ocean you say, sometimes the Pacific was very still, can be very still and yet every minute or two quite a big wave at first you didn't see it as a wave it comes and then it breaks and at that moment it seems to have an independent

existence from the ocean and as I was watching in the spring in California a child next to me was saying to the father, look there's a big one it's coming for a moment the wave had the ocean had an independent the wave had an independent existence a big one and then it was gone so some humans go so deeply that the whole world is just ripples on the surface of the vastness of being and so they dwell in that and then they say they laugh and say, it's all unreal but it's ok now unfortunately this then others come and make it into a concept they go to the sage and the sage laughs, you come with your problems and says well, just be still and watch and be alert then problems tend to disappear and you'll know what to do if you have to take any action you'll know what to do and the rest they laugh it's all unreal anyway, the sage then said and so the disciple wrote down, it is all unreal and then the next day they got very upset and then somebody they go back to the sage oh, I thought it was didn't you say it was all unreal it was a mental concept and as a mental concept alone it doesn't help you to say it's all unreal or the famous Zen example of that, the disciple says I've realized the truth master, there's only Buddha nature, that's their way of putting it, there's only that and everything has Buddha nature and that is the essential reality of all forms I've realized it completely now and in that moment the master takes a stick and hits the disciple over the head the disciple screams and is very angry and the master says if all is unreal and empty where does that anger come from anger was the form reacting but now we come to the inner this brings us now to phenomena that arise within you such as emotions or thoughts they also come out of the vastness of consciousness of being and just as you bring awareness to the world around you, be there as that which perceives the underlying field you also can bring that to your inner feelings a little bit more subtle because the inner can overpower you very quickly and it's got you the ability to allow the form that this moment takes to be as it is, is not only applied, not only applies to the external world it also applies to whatever form the present moment takes inside you as an emotion as a feeling and so what does not work here is to say I should not be feeling this or I don't want to feel this or go away because if you say go away to an emotion you create another one on top or if you have a mental image of yourself of someone who is already free of these emotions because you've been practicing meditation for 20 years or you are a good Christian and you have a mental image of yourself as a good Christian you may have to deny certain emotions that you feel that don't correspond to that image you have of yourself so some people don't even recognize what they feel oh no, no I'm not angry at all or they shout I am not angry and so that doesn't work. What doesn't work is oh, you're not angry then what's that? What does it feel like?

Can you watch that? Can you feel it? Can you bring some presence to it?

Yeah Can you separate that from the story? Because it renews it, it likes to use the mind and the story will add more energy to the emotion and the emotion will amplify the story What he did to me the next day you're still thinking about it and talking about it the emotion is still there, you keep it going next month, it's still next year, what he did to me

last year, I'll never forget and the emotion is still there you're not like the duck that I speak of all the ducks do that on the water, when they get into a fight there is a lot of what could be duck anger maybe it is, it looks like like a lot of flapping of wings, two ducks ducks get into a fight last for half a minute and then it's not like humans half a minute, then they separate and then each duck kind of stands up on the water a bit and flaps their wings vigorously they let go of the energy, the excess energy that came during the fight that in humans would become emotion and then a story and would go on for a long long time there they let go of it in a few seconds, they flap their wings and then they swim in total peace they look around if they had a human mind, of course it would become much more complicated because they would be having a story, you know what this duck did to me?

what the duck did to me? let me tell you about it now, a lot of emotion arises, a lot of very unhealthy emotion, no emotion is to be condemned as wrong or bad, but you can see that certain emotions are not good for the body certain emotions are almost as if you were eating a poisonous substance as far as the body is concerned so there is no moral judgment of good emotions or bad emotions the only thing we can see is that some emotions do not have a good effect on the body anger resentment sadness depression, fear dreadful one and so if you could observe when an emotion is active, if you could look into the body, you would see the changes, the physiological changes that the body goes through when there is an emotion the stomach lining changes color when you are angry juice, stomach, juice everything, the circulation changes breathing slows down or becomes much more shallow it has been said it is hard to be angry when you are breathing deeply it is anger is so these emotions arise and some don't feel so good it is ok to recognize as you go through life more aligned with the present moment there are fewer and fewer emotions that arise otherwise continuously out of resistance to what is an enormous amount of emotional stuff is generated continuously when you unconsciously as most humans still do when you unconsciously resist whatever arises in this moment there is anger or there is fear of running away the complaining is accompanied by an emotion what is the kind of emotion that comes with a complaining mind pattern it is partly anger partly something else some emotions are kind of borderline cases in which a mixture of fear and anger and so on so less of this arises the more you align yourself with the present moment less and less do reactive emotions arise that come from denial or resistance so with that you are already becoming free of a lot of totally unnecessary resistances in the body that have a very bad effect on the functioning of the organism however every human being still carries this is the truth passed on genetically from the distant past in humanity is an enormous amount of human pain because if you look at human history you see how much pain humans have created because of their mental dysfunction how much pain they have created for themselves and other humans just the suffering has been dreadful that humans have inflicted on each other and themselves continuously the cruelty the torture, murder, war continuous warfare, violence and of course that leaves a residue probably if you

approach it from a scientific external physical viewpoint probably the DNA of every human being has built into it pain also and that's you come into this world already with an energy field of human pain that is the human condition and it differs some humans have more of it than others it doesn't necessarily mean that you are closer to spiritual realization if you have less pain the opposite may be the case because you want to be free more if you have more pain this is what we call the pain body inherited pain from the past the genetic pain, the racial past of humanity sometimes the past of a particular country becomes part incorporated into each person's pain body who lives in that country and is born in that country the past of a race also so every country has also their collective pain body this country has a collective pain body which is there less than some of the collective pain body that certain of the old European countries have where there has been even more violence over more centuries and millennia than here a large part of the collective pain body in this country that has become part of everybody's pain body has to do with certain acts of violence that were perpetrated as this country was colonized and discovered to do with black people enormous amount of violence inflicted on them and the native people so that has what has been done to them again through human madness and dysfunction has seeped into the collective pain body and it is something that every human being then has some of that carried inside and then comes the personal aspect you are a child and your parents have a pain body and you see that around you that energy and things are done to you by an unconscious world at school, the educational system so further pain is added in childhood emotional pain and every emotional pain you suffer leaves a residue an energetic residue inside you and it joins the pain that is already there a field of emotional heaviness, contraction or tightness, life energy that is trapped and so humans carry that inside and it is usually personalized and mistaken for my problem my personal pain the pain body in humans as you probably know already, is sometimes dormant and sometimes active in some humans it is mostly dormant and only comes twice a year maybe Thanksgiving and Christmas when they meet their family but in most humans it comes periodically it needs to renew itself the energy rises, the emotion is triggered by an event something somebody says or does and then suddenly an enormous reaction comes the triggering event is usually quite small but the reaction is one of enormous pain anger or fear or deep sadness out of proportion to the triggering event but you don't see that when it happens you believe that this event caused you to feel that, or this person when he made this insensitive remark caused you to feel this enormous amount of pain it just happened that this insensitive remark had a certain similarity with your pain body it said something about you it didn't acknowledge your existence and your father and your mother never acknowledged your existence so that kind of thing can easily trigger if that's where the trigger lies for your pain body then enormous emotional pain arises and immediately moves into your thought structures and will dictate what you think it will also then feed on your thoughts which are then angry thoughts or fearful thoughts or depressed thoughts and it will feed on every thought that you can think what is happening now is you are indulging in pain not you you've become the pain body and you are loving every

minute of it now the consciousness that you are has become dormant so to speak and something has taken the place of you and is shouting and screaming at someone perhaps or running away in dreadful fear and thinking extremely fearful thoughts and if you at that moment you could wake up and observe what's happening and there's no reason why you should not be able to do that now as there's so much presence arising in you if at that moment you could feel yourself, feel what's happening, you would notice pleasure in pain you would notice that you don't want to get out of it, but you would also notice that you are not that you are the one who observes it, you are the awareness that would come the end of that particular pain body movement, bringing awareness to it that cuts the link between the emotion and your thought processes otherwise the emotions feed your thoughts amplify and energize your thoughts and the thoughts feed the emotion you can see it when people talk angrily about what somebody did to them or think about it, and it can go on for hours until the pain body has finally taken in enough energy and they become dormant again for a while and then there's you feel better for a while like waking up out of a dream and sometimes you might even say what was that all about, and if you had it with your partner it could be after, when it comes to an end you can't even remember how it all started and then if you do remember it you realize that the triggering event was nothing just a tiny thing but the emotion was enormous so whenever this happens don't confuse the rising pain the emotion with who you are can you be there as the awareness that feels the pain without totally being it now this still implies that you have to allow it it's here it is what is at this moment at this moment there's this what does then disappear the awareness replaces thinking identification of thought with the pain so the link between your thought processes and the emotion is cut and there's an awareness that you now bring to it and that means quickly it will run down and each time you bring awareness to it some of that energy becomes freed, because the awareness is like a sunlight like something shining on it and it dissolves the hardness of the emotion gradually the awareness is like that spotlight or sunlight it dissolves the hardness of it and the more often you bring awareness to it whenever it comes the more the energy that had been trapped in there becomes freed, it kind of melts one could say almost that's one analogy you could use it melts and what you notice then is increased aliveness because many people's aliveness is consumed to a large extent by their emotional pain that's in the pain body it is like having a little psychic parasite don't go no this is just let's just say it's a way of looking at it but comes close to the truth because everything is energy energy forms, no more no less, every thought you think is an energy form that arises for a moment, it has it's a little entity, a little being every thought it doesn't have material reality but yet it has energetic reality so every emotion also is a little temporary being inside you an energetic formation and so is the pain body which is the accumulation of past emotion so you have this little psychic thing living inside you maybe that's what inspired all these films science fiction films with the thing coming out of your stomach and maybe that is the meaning because if you go back to the Old Testament on almost every page you read Jesus met somebody with an evil spirit inside and Jesus put attention on that person and just looked often the

evil spirit would depart and if you read that you say that is strange, in those times almost every other person must have been possessed by an evil spirit because he continuously meets people with evil spirits and that's just one way of looking, nowadays it's not so helpful to say that modern humans need a different way of looking at it and yet the reality is the same, if we say evil spirit we make it too difficult but there is some reality there there is also the fact that humans who have very strong pain bodies and are completely unconscious of them, in other words completely identified, can attract certain energies that are because the planet is full of energy fields that we do not see so a very strong pain body can attract from somewhere else an energy field that corresponds to the vibrational frequency of that pain body and then that would magnify the pain that's already there, so a large part of violence that's perpetrated by humans is perpetrated by humans who are possessed by their pain body and are totally unconscious totally unconscious if that could be taught at schools, the simple fact that you can be aware of emotion inside you as it arises and a six year old can learn that if you use the right language you can tell a six year old that they can be aware of whatever strong emotion arises in them without needing to be totally identified at first they won't know what you mean at first you may have to say it after the child's pain body has had an episode of screaming or shouting or withdrawal and then say there what was that, pointing it out gradually enabling the child to see it a hundred times more important to learn that at school than all the abstract stuff that I never liked and most of it I could never do so, but the main thing is for you to live it to notice it when it comes when a relatively small thing brings a strong reaction bring awareness to it get out of the story that wants to align yourself with the pain body so that you can watch the energy of it and then you can even say if you are somebody you trust you can say to your partner my pain body is now active watch out to be able to say that means you are already very very conscious indeed if you can be say that while the pain body is there you are close to buddhahood almost the pain body does not like to be looked at directly it doesn't like your attention on it it has its own kind of intelligence it's cunning and if you truly bring attention to it, sometimes you may be able to do it now, just as it first comes, as it arises ah, there it is then it sometimes happens that it comes and it feels the attention on it and it shrinks back again and what it's saying is I haven't got a chance now I'll wait until a better opportunity arises and then it'll wait it'll seem dormant but it'll just wait for the right remark that serves as a trigger or the right action or anything sometimes if you live alone it could even be a thought that comes into your head that triggers it oh my just a thought that confirms that you are indeed a victim of life and suddenly

[Speaker 3] (5:08:01 - 5:08:02)

ooh

[Speaker 1] (5:08:04 - 7:08:13)

and so how long the pain body stays active varies from person to person it could be the

more conscious you are the more quickly the energy passes and then it may come again but a little bit less each time a little bit less but it could take how long, nobody knows depends very much on the density until you're completely free doesn't really matter it is there to teach you to be aware that's what it's there for it's great if you have it and that gives you also the motivation to bring awareness into your lives because do you want to suffer forever do you want to mistake that for who you are for the rest of your life it's a wonderful motivation being in the body is an extremely helpful thing to be in the body when you're feeling fine because then it's easier to be there to catch it with your attention because there too you can feel it inside your body where the emotion is if you're habitually you're always in the head it's much harder to be there and catch the pain body when it arises as an emotion in the body so to bring attention into the body whenever you can it's extremely helpful then you begin to be to dwell in here and then be there as that happens and then you can watch it in other people and don't mistake it for who they are which is a wonderful thing because if you think their pain body is who they are then you will suddenly formulate a concept about that person and that becomes obscures the reality of that person oh he is a complete jerk and that concept has then dismissed that person as that all aspects other aspects of that person have disappeared underneath that concept you've seen his pain body yes it is a jerk, the pain body truly is but there is something else there too, there must be then you don't mistake that for the reality of that human being and don't personalize it neither for yourself it's not your personal problem, it's humanity it's human pain not your pain, human pain it gets easier when you realize it's not yours it's human pain and it's also easier to allow it in others to realize it's not their fault it's human pain so compassion arises when you see it around you compassion towards the so called shortcomings of other humans they are not really shortcomings but that's to see where they fail whenever that energy comes in and then you see that there are certain humans who are in almost continuous possession of an active pain body and they are often those people who commit acts of violence on the planet they have suffered enormous pain and they want others to suffer pain too and they themselves want to suffer more pain, that's why they are doing it it's completely dysfunctional but again once you see it and underneath all that even in the most violent person there is the unconditioned consciousness the space the essential reality the essential reality of I am that has never been touched by anything that they did, no matter how dreadful it has been there is hidden underneath the hell that lives in some people there is still the original purity and innocence of their being that has nothing to do with the form and there have been cases of murderers and others who committed dreadful acts who suddenly, through enormous suffering suddenly their entire pain body dissolved that can happen in rare cases that all at once, through enormous suffering, perhaps an hour before they are going to execute you or a few days, or a few weeks or months, suddenly all that which is not you but had pretended to be you goes and something emerges that is almost another being but it's the essence of who you are so and that is beautiful when it happens the greatest amount of pain is perpetrated by the collective pain bodies of nations tribes religions any collective identities and they carry

their collective pain body and the collective pain body wants the same as the individual pain body but ultimately there is no individual pain body but when it manifests as a collective the collective wants to inflict pain and wants to suffer more pain and so humans have been engaged in warfare ever since the beginning of recorded history and beyond and it's only the individual that can become free we cannot have a social program unless the individual has become free no matter how you want to change the structures of society and a great attempt was made through communism which was a wonderful idea at the beginning equality for all no personal possessions everybody the same rights everybody the same status it was a good idea it came very early before the mind structures had undergone any change so the idea came in the old mind structures had not changed so very quickly the idea got perverted and they created instead of heaven on earth hell on earth first they thought they had to kill a few million in order to eliminate all those who stood in the way of the revolution in their own countries so the present moment was said it's a means to an end we need to get to heaven on earth it's somewhere in the future let's create hell then first so that we can get there but it always applies to what Jesus said on the cross they know not what they do ultimately and a shift is now happening it's happening here in this room as we sit here as we realize that which is deeper than the person in us that which is deeper than the what we thought of as personal pain that we felt inside us and we realize yes you realize who you are that is what everybody's ultimate purpose on this planet is to realize who they are beyond the story and when you don't realize that nothing will satisfy you no substitute will do except that and so when God was asked somebody apparently it's in the Old Testament somebody asked God what's your name? and God said I am that's the entire truth is already contained in that I am that I am that means the innermost sense of who you are of identity is one with the divine it's where you and God merge so there is a place in you where you and God are one and your purpose in life beyond any personal purpose that you have because many people want to know what am I meant to do here? I know I am meant to do something but I haven't quite found it yet many people have that feeling well first of all find the essence of what you are meant to do then what you are meant to do on the temporary level of form will emerge the divine will then express itself through you in one form or another but before you can truly find that which you are meant to do on the level of personal form go to the more essential place you are meant to realize who you are beyond the personalized sense of self and now the good news here is to realize that you do not need future or time and so this message ultimately no spiritual teaching goes to the root goes to the core goes to the essence that is not applicable to anyone no matter what their life situation is there are some teaching that you can make it just use the power of this or that and you can achieve anything you like that on its own level is true too but what if you only have an hour to live or a day or a week or a year it does not require time for you to be yourself nor do you need anything that you do not yet have now to be yourself no more knowledge is required now it does not mean you can't learn new things but not in the search for who you are or to confirm your identity or to show that you know more than others or that you find fame and recognition that does

not work but if you enjoy learning new things on the level of form it is beautiful but you do not need more things to be who you are you do not need more money, more possessions more status, more knowledge more experiences including spiritual yes but I haven't had the fireworks yet aren't you supposed to get these inner fireworks well some people have them, others don't and it's in the nature of fireworks that they come and go the question is who is having these fireworks to whom do they happen in what is the field in which they happen the field of consciousness in which the vision of Jesus or Krishna or the Buddha happens some people have visions and they are beautiful and then they go and say 10 years ago I had this wonderful vision and I felt so great for 3 months afterwards who was having that vision I was having that vision and who is I I well I am I I am consciousness in which that beautiful vision appeared and that is that doesn't come and go that's the essence that is timeless and that realizes itself, that's the purpose of the universe on the level of humanity the evolutionary level of humanity, the purpose of the universe is for consciousness to realize itself through the human form and then the mind asks and what happens after that now you may have noticed that's what the mind does it says what then, what next it's better not to feed the mind with too much stuff that becomes imagination to the mind but you become a self aware cell in the totality of consciousness and all these are just approximations words, we cannot use words to describe something that is totally beyond the realm of form of objects, of phenomenal existence you become, so to speak a self realized just as this body has cells the entire universe consists of one could say this is just an analogy sparks of consciousness you become self aware and through you the universe becomes self aware first the universe played the game of form and the drama that comes with that and enjoyed that tremendously for hundreds of thousands of years at some point consciousness must have said let's play the game of form and pretend to be somebody special, somebody in particular let's pretend to be a human person and then play around in the world of form oh, that will be great and then for a while it played but it still knew its origin and then it said well, it's not doesn't feel totally real because I'm always at peace and then said, ok, let's forget who you are play that game ah now we can really get into it and then the point comes when it gets tired of the drama and the pain and then it recognizes itself much more deeply than it could ever have done before it lost itself and found itself this is just a little story of the universe, don't take it to be it's not literally true it's a metaphor for something that we cannot really talk about so you have been searching for yourself for a long time many humans are still searching in the world of make-believe the world of forms hoping at some point to find a sufficient number of objects out there that they can identify with as mind objects and say now I'm finally complete and full and they suffer and here we have seeds of realized consciousness some of you not yet fully it's just emerging who you are not yet perhaps your permanent reality you may be drawn into identification with thought identification with the story of me, identification with the pain body periodically and go through further episodes of that and then wake up again perhaps more quickly more and more quickly you wake up out of the forgetfulness you remember you forget who you are identify and then remember

who you are you wake up again and it's always waking up into the now suffering can do that now because you are at a point where suffering can act as an alarm clock that says you must have lost the now otherwise you would not be in suffering pain perhaps, yes emotional pain, yes but suffering requires a psychological entity, me so any suffering that arises means you must have lost the now and so you will blame a situation always no, no, I haven't lost the now this creep did something to me or my boss did it yes, those are your teachers they are the challenges that come and unless you meet the present moment in the state of intense alertness and face it the challenge will draw you back into an old reaction and you get identified with that so meeting the present moment, not only allow it to be that's beautiful, it's an essential part of the new consciousness but also look it straight in the face allowing is the gentle aspect of presence of consciousness and looking it straight in the face is the fierce aspect of consciousness and both are needed yes to what is and facing it not in any opposing way facing it in a state of openness you look it straight in the eye and there's alert attention a current of awareness flows out and watches looks and as it looks there's a stillness that flows into the looking and intelligence operates still and then right speech right action and so on, all the things that the buddhists try to put into practice you don't need to try to put it into practice, it arises out of being fully present in the now if you're trying to put into practice right this, right speech, right thought right this, you can't if you're not fully present in the now you're trying to, the christians have done the same I'm trying to love my neighbor as myself it's very hard and finally you have to give up they hate their neighbor they haven't recognized their neighbor as themselves they haven't gone deep enough within themselves to the essence and seen their neighbor from there, from that still place of non-conceptualization of not imposing a conceptual reality on their neighbor they're able to meet their neighbor in the field of nowness of presence then as a natural consequence they love their neighbor as themselves because they recognize their neighbor as themselves there's no effort involved in it you cannot try to love someone for a while, it might look as if you succeeded and then the opposite of love will come up and then you'll hate yourself for it, it becomes more and more complex then you need to see a psychologist and then after 10 years of psychoanalysis you've analyzed every nook and cranny of yourself and you say, I now know myself do you? well, all you know is things about yourself your story the deepest secrets of your story and even the deepest secrets of your story are not that deep no time is needed to be who you are don't lose the now or you lose yourself whenever it happens that's fine too you will notice it quite soon and then it's step back use a portal or an exit point as we called it whatever it may be, the inner body sense perceptions yes to what is allowing just enter the field of aware presence directly from past and future just this what is the problem at this moment is the question that reveals all your problems as mind made constructs if there is a problem at this moment it will manifest as a challenge that is right in front of me or the problem is something that requires action now, that I can do now and act beyond that what is the problem at this moment this is a good pointer that question that can point you to reality whenever you feel burdened by your life situation just a moment, let's

check in here the only thing that's ever real is this moment and what is the problem at this moment that wakes you up and then you have to look inside well, I feel fear here a contraction, is that a problem no, it's an energy field here that I feel ok, so it's not a problem well, no and then what well, this thing is I've just lost that and I don't know what's going to happen I've got this court case coming up tomorrow and I have to ok, what's the problem at this moment and you can feel the mind straining to get away from this moment so you may have to ask a question several times, what is the problem now and finally there'll be an awakening and you go ping, there is no problem now thank you welcome we're all practicing the power of now and so we're not waiting for the next moment for the speaker to speak or what the next thing is that he's going to say except for one or two minds that I can hear that are saying come on, let's get on with it now the fact that I'll be speaking for a while may create the misleading expectation or impression that I'm here to fill your mind with more stuff more content information knowledge, words and if you have that expectation in other words if you expect the talk to be interesting then you may walk out after 10 or 20 minutes what do you mean not interesting interesting means food for thought that's an interesting thought I don't quite agree with it there are deeper things in life than interesting deeper things in yourself than what's interesting to the mind to thinking but most people haven't found that dimension within themselves they are stuck in interesting and if you're stuck in interesting you're also stuck in boring because a lot of the time life isn't that interesting and then you're looking for the next interesting thing to fill your mind a sunrise is not interesting can't be called interesting it's vaster and deeper than that but if you had a few interesting little clouds blocking the sun that might be called interesting or look at these interesting little clouds so the talk here is not to fill your mind with more stuff you can go to many places for that universities the internet television everywhere they are filling your mind with more stuff information knowledge and pseudo knowledge theories beliefs, standpoints, positions so if this talk doesn't work on that level how does it work?

is the talk going to work on the emotional level? is the speaker in a moment going to jump up and down the stage to create an emotional high in you? and when you get home you've reached the low already no doesn't work on that level either because the speaker is uncharismatic and it's a miracle that so many people come to listen to an uncharismatic speaker that means there must be something real going on and what else could this be?

is it entertainment? that's another way some talks are entertaining not really there may be occasional laughter so these three levels I mentioned the mental level of information or knowledge the emotional level or the entertainment level they may be present here in small doses I remember for example my first talk in Holland two years ago happened to be very funny I don't know why everybody laughed a lot including myself so there must have been some element entertaining element there why are we here? that's only a small fraction of why we are here what this evening is about so if it's none of these

things or not primarily any of these things why are we here? you are here to try out and I use simple terms because it is so simple to try out a different level of consciousness from the normal and many of you have already tried it out and quite a few of you perhaps already live at least partly in that different state of consciousness from the normal state which is a state of continuous incessant thought activity the compulsion to think to interpret to label everything to judge everything immediately and to perceive everything through the veil or the screen of thought activity that's the normal way to live it's so normal that most people don't even know that that is how they live because everybody lives like that everybody they see on TV lives like that but in many human beings now the ability is developing is arising a new found ability and that is to step out of the movement of thought if only for a moment time doesn't matter there and there's a moment of simple alert attention so the secret of our evening together the only thing that ultimately matters here I'm telling you this now in case you have more important things to do you can go home early to find in yourself the ability to be conscious without thought and the mind says can you explain a bit more I know that many of you are ready to hear this, there are many audiences to whom I would not put this so directly because they would not be ready for it it would be a shock and half the audience would walk out now the mind says what's such a big deal about conscious without thought I don't want to become a vegetable or a tree or a stone or even an animal because they are conscious in their own way but they don't have conceptual thought activity they are not burdened with continuous mental noise they are present in the now and they don't inhabit a world of problems their life does not consist of one damn thing after another Churchill's definition of history of course he was right but not just history that's one damn thing after another your own life your life you may have noticed something works out here very well and then something goes wrong there but the heaviness of living yes, life is challenging even for an animal even for a tree there's nothing wrong with challenging but humans have something else there is a heaviness to human existence especially in these times a weariness almost as if every human being carried a burden it's the burden of themselves ultimately it's also perceived of course as the burden of my life one damn day after another and many people wake up in the morning open their eyes for a moment are conscious without thought and look at the light coming through the window and for a moment they sense an aliveness for a moment it's good to be alive they touch what one could call being just to be is very sweet and after a few moments a few seconds the first thought comes in and already a weight comes and it will be either something that happened yesterday or more likely something that's going to happen today and that leads to the next thought oh yeah, and that oh no, and that all these today oh my god, I've got to get on with it come on, let's go and then switch on the TV and listen to the problems of the world and then you get in the car and then you're in the traffic jam and already the weight the heaviness has descended and millions upon millions live in that way how can you live in this world if all of the millions live in that way how can you live differently surely it's not that almost impossible well the mind may be telling you that surely you can't you have so many things to deal with every day surely

you can't expect me to be in a different state of consciousness I've got things to deal with I've got responsibilities you are okay you are a spiritual teacher you've got nothing else to do I sometimes listen to people angrily defending their right to be unhappy and yet underneath the heaviness that lies on top of you there is something else it's so close you can't measure it ultimately the heaviness is the stream of thinking that you mistake for yourself that you are so identified with that it becomes a sense of me thinking I am the thought that I am thinking at this moment that is what life is like for most people I am it's an unconscious belief that I am this thought I am so much in this thought that I am the thought you could say the thought has self in it the thought, every thought that arises takes you over grips you completely and then the next and the next accompanied by emotions that correspond to those thoughts fearful thought, fearful emotion fearful emotion creating further fearful thoughts lying awake in bed at night oh my god how am I ever going to get out of this get me out of here out of myself I saw a cartoon the other day two men speaking in an office one man looking very grim and saying to the other man I am sick and tired of being chained to myself 24 hours a day the usual expression is chained to my desk chained to myself 24 hours a day I live with this thought made mind made entity that's a form of collective conditioning for humanity everybody inherits that thousands of years of conditioning of the human mind of identifying increasingly more and more with mind activity and a sense of self derived from a mental concepts of who I am that I need to revive in my mind continuously and think about my life and my problems and talk about it to others so that they can confirm that my problems and my story are indeed very serious and real, absolutely real, yes you're right you should be unhappy so how can you undo if you recognize the madness of living in such a way with a noise machine in the head how can you undo thousands of years of collective mental conditioning, human conditioning conditioning do we need another thousand years to undo that or another thirty years a lifetime, two lifetimes three lifetimes the mind would be happy with that if I could tell some of you would be happy if I told you, you need two more lifetimes and then you'll be ok free, liberated oh, ok I can live with that two more lifetimes of unhappiness the mind would also be very happy go away here if I gave a recipe, a chart for the next seven years of how to become free of your mind and your mind made sense of self the mind would be happy because the mind loves future it loves to be given more time the mind loves more of anything in fact it's looking for more whatever it is, I need more to feel more fulfilled fuller, myself I'm not fully myself yet says the mind the mind made self because the story of me has not yet found its satisfying conclusion, hasn't fully developed yet I haven't started living yet, I'm only 85 I'm still waiting I'm waiting to make it finally he made it he made it and those who make it that's a funny expression whatever that means are successful in the world or what the world considers to be success and those who make it they get a little high as if in a drug and then they are just as unhappy as those who haven't made it I've met many who made it in the eyes of the world and they recognize it's an illusion it didn't make me happy fulfilled, at peace I still wake up in the middle of the night in fear so nothing no more is given to you, not even time because this is the wonderful thing that the mind

doesn't like to hear to be free of thousands of years of conditioning does not require time or future at this moment you can step out of the movement of thought and allow quite simply an alert presence to be there you are not here any longer as the carrier of your personal history but you are here as an alive field of aware presence a moment, a gap in the stream of thought to the mind it's not significant it's the greatest thing that can happen to you those of you who are still not quite there two little hints that may be helpful as you listen to these words you may be able to feel the inner energy field of your body the aliveness that undoubtedly is there in your body the inner sense of aliveness very subtle in the background your hands, your arms, your legs your entire body has an inner aliveness to it most humans never feel that they are alive that every cell is alive intelligently alive because the body is fulfilling thousands of functions simultaneously so there is an intelligence at work in what looks like a physical body the intelligence that coordinates the thousands of functions of the body is not something that you can see nobody has seen it and yet it is there you are not doing it at this moment you are not working your liver or your circulation or your heart or your lungs on all these countless things that are happening at this very moment the body is looking after itself it has its own intelligence that in many ways is greater than what the mind could do so the aliveness in the body is an intelligent aliveness and the wonderful thing is when you direct attention there it removes attention away from thinking you cannot feel the aliveness of the inner body and think a lot doesn't go, doesn't work because you haven't got the consciousness is taken out of thinking and moves into the body feel that and then you become kind of more rooted in your being not just the physical being that's the external but that which underlies the physical you become more rooted in the being that you are instead of living in the upper floor which is the mind exclusively so as you sit here and listen to the words have some attention in your inner energy field, feel that alive presence that you are listen from there with the entire being, not just with the head, so to speak, it's a little hint of where your attention is where your sense of presence is, to be present you can't be present just in the head you're just thinking when you're thinking you're not present all thinking is of the past it uses past concepts to be present here as, to be rooted in yourself in being to feel that subtle sense of aliveness and you can still, you have enough consciousness or enough attention left to listen to the words, they are not complicated there's nothing you need to work out in your mind about these words because they are neither interesting nor complicated there's absolutely nothing to work out in your mind and if your mind is telling you I have to work that out no, you don't, it's too simple so directing this is one that is helpful for you, it can give you a taste of being rooted in the now in yourself, in being and yet not losing the ability to perceive in fact whether you perceive visually or through auditory perception or any other kind of perception in fact you perceive more clearly when you are not perceiving through the veil of continuous thinking that clouds every perception that brings past into every perception of the now because every perception must be now, it brings past it colors the beautiful moment and it obscures it with past and that's why people go through life continuously judging and interpreting according to their mental conditioning

they live in a fantasy land maya the veil of illusion so here listening as you sit there and sensing that that aliveness inside that helps you to be become still inside without losing consciousness if you became still and were beginning to lose consciousness through having a few drinks that is not the way we want to go then it would be better to be in turmoil and at least there is a little bit of consciousness there rather than going towards sleep yes it's nice if you become free of your mind a little bit after three whiskeys a bit less thinking, you feel better for a while you start laughing perhaps for a moment it feels good but then the next drink again pulls you towards more and more unconsciousness so you leave the realm of thinking which has been in the last few thousands of years the human realm you leave that dimension of consciousness and move towards sleep or unconsciousness and there are also some humans that you may have met who are so simple that they can't think very much we would call them perhaps mentally underdeveloped and they seem to be happy most of the time they laugh and in a way you might envy them you say, oh I wish I was happy like them and yet if you had a choice you probably would not want to be like them if somebody said, okay you can choose to be the village idiot or your unhappy self that you've been for 40 years, which one do you choose and you would hesitate a moment and say, okay I'd rather be my unhappy self because that is not the way to go for us regression to a previous state falling below thinking no, no when you step out of thought here and experience the thoughtless state which is so simple for those who are ready and many are ready, others are not whoever is not ready is not going to survive the next hour here it's just too excruciatingly boring this shouldn't prevent anybody from going to the toilet thinking that everybody else is going to think that I'm not ready as you sit here continuously feeling that aliveness so rooted in yourself when you see images of Buddha in the I don't mean the fat Buddha that is influenced by Taoist teaching, that's a beautiful one too, with a huge belly, who laughs all the time because he has no problems because he's not thinking but there's another, the other Buddha Southeast Asian Buddhas Japanese Buddhas and the genuine ones if you look closely have a slightly, very slightly protruding belly just a little bit they're rooted in here their center of gravity is not here because otherwise the Buddha would look so their center of gravity is here in the center of their perceived body so they rest there ultimately how you sit or walk doesn't matter, that's just one little hint you don't need to sit in a particular way another little hint because you may realize the essence of why we are here is to get a taste for some of you or to deepen for others that state of conscious thoughtless presence out of which anything truly new comes do you think when Rembrandt was painting just to choose one example do you think he was there with a brush in his hand thinking, okay, I wonder what my next brush stroke is going to be if I put it there, then it may clash with that I'm not quite sure but maybe two more centimeters to the right let's measure it might look better over, no he just looked at the canvas and waited and then it happened who is painting? I don't know, not me, he would have said if you had asked him creativity arises out of the state of thoughtless presence in which you are more awake much more awake than when you are immersed in thinking you don't lose the ability to think because

occasionally you have to think for certain things thought is very helpful but thought when it possesses you becomes a dreadful thing, thought when it pretends to be you is a dreadful burden so we are going we are rising, so to speak above thought not falling below conscious without thought not unconscious without thought that's easy you can just knock yourself out with whatever conscious another little hint as you sit here feeling the aliveness in the body and you may want occasionally to direct your attention to the gaps which are quite small in between the words that you are hearing and you may notice you can't think about that what does it mean all I'm asking for you is to notice the gaps of no words in between words in between sentences small who would ever pay attention to that normally and yet what does that do to you when you become aware of a gap you're not thinking because it's a gap of stillness, a gap of silence there's nothing there so you become aware of what when you listen to a word you're aware of the words the thoughts that have become sounds but when you're aware of the absence of something the absence of sound what is it that you're aware of nothing what does that mean it means you become familiar with what one could call awareness itself without an object and you may notice again you can't think about that because every thought takes you out of it now this is an amazing it is a radical revolutionary amazing thing for a human being to discover in him or herself that possibility that dimension of consciousness you can be aware of awareness or in other words because there seems to be some duality here which isn't there you become self aware or to put it in other words awareness consciousness becomes conscious of itself of no object in it and then the mind comes in and says yeah but I can't hold it for very long it doesn't matter the length of time is irrelevant a second two seconds and so usually I touch upon this mainly in retreats when we go deeper not so often in talks but the fact that this is being mentioned now is must mean that many of you or most of you are ready to hear this are ready for this because whatever words come out are being drawn out by the collective field in the room so there's the possibility for you to become self aware that is who you are and you cannot put a name or concept to it it's like a feeling of coming home it's always there that the awareness is the background to all your experiences you couldn't experience anything in any experience there must be someone or something that makes that experience possible, that makes that sense perception possible even a dream, a dream like thing and ultimately all of life is dream like even a dream you say, oh it's only a dream, it's not real and yet even in a dream and our ordinary life is also a kind of dream because it passes, everything passes very quickly, the forms in your life, they pass very quickly go fleeting everything is very fleeting every experience is fleeting and then comes the next, the next form so it's always not just a dream that you dream when you sleep the dream of normal existence that has a dream like quality and yet even in a dream that you dream at night there must be something that is real because something that enables the forms that appear in the dream to be there there must be something there that makes the dream possible there must be a canvas on which the dream images are painted there must be a field of consciousness in which the dream happens out of which these forms come and when they finish to which they return so there is in

that in this dream like world there must be an essence that is not part of the dream and if you do not know that essence consciously you are lost in the dream just as you are lost in the world of thinking with no other reference point, nothing else in your life but the continuous flux of thoughts and then experiences lost in thought and lost in the world homeless hoping to arrive home and always looking to the future for that sense of fulfillment or completion that only the present moment can give you noticing the gaps the silence between the words not significant from the point of view of the mind when you notice the gap, stillness is in you because only the stillness in you recognizes it and the stillness is also the alertness can you bring that into everyday life that you wake up many times during the day you wake up out of being lost in some kind of activity being lost in some kind of mind stream can you many times during the day wake up out of being lost in the concerns of things that need that demand your attention this is so important deal with this immediately yes, yes it is and thoughts every thought pretending think me I matter, I'm so important me, me, think and so people become prematurely old because life becomes heavy and many people you see, you can see the heaviness they carry and the tightness of living and having that kind of sense of self comes they become more and more rigid and it never stops up here can you wake up out of thought into the aliveness, the alertness that you only have that is inseparable from present moment that is ultimately the meaning of now ultimately what the now is is yourself the field of consciousness in which the entire world appears the now is the space and then there is the content of your life there is the space of who you are and there is the content of what happens in your life most people are completely lost in the content of their life what fills up their life I call it sometimes life situation and Churchill's definition of history applies one damn thing after another and then you remember things from your life situation that becomes your personal history which is a stream of thoughts with some emotions that go with those thoughts and for many people their personal history is a dreadful thing to carry they are not happy with it not happy with the story of me not happy with what somebody did to me or what they did to me or what I did to them not happy with the way it went my story and so you carry for the rest of your life a pseudo identity called your personal history and that gives you your sense of self what a dreadful thing a story that you repeat in your head again and again and tell others about it probably that you keep alive through thinking and the emotions that go with it you keep alive you have to cling to this because who are you without that now of course you don't have to forget your story no but see how much deeper you are than the content of your life if you are only looking to content your life will never be fulfilled because it is a bottomless pit the ego looks for more to fulfill me material possessions bank account knowledge experiences relationships drugs food whatever it is as long as it is more it is looking to add more content hoping at some point to be fulfilled to be yourself the point never arrives because your life is content based content and content cannot satisfy anybody except very briefly and then you need more you can realize that now because you probably have all experienced already getting what you want and then that wasn't enough or what made you happy one day the next day the very same thing made you

unhappy good example of that is your last marriage she made me so happy and then she made me so unhappy so looking to content which is to the world what can the world offer to make me happy there is always something that comes in that seems to spoil my enjoyment of this I came here I paid two thousand dollars to come to this paradise island and what are these cockroaches doing here the mosquitoes it's too hot it's boring everyday the sun shines and the great job finally I got this big important job and then it's making me ill with stress and then suddenly they call me in and say we don't need you anymore says the big corporation head the head of the corporation you can go with the services are no longer required thanks nice knowing you that was my life my identity the content of my life in Japan it used to be content not anymore I believe people identified so strongly with their company when they lost their job they would commit suicide I'm nobody content and content comes and goes it's not ultimately satisfying it cannot be so you drop that expectation and then you just allow this moment to be as it is including the imperfection the so called imperfection of this moment this shouldn't be happening yeah but it is what disappears is the gap between what I want and what is I want means I want it to be in a certain way the content of my life should be like and that is the gap of unhappiness of suffering and most people continuously go through life I want and this is and there's the gap so most people want to get what they want whereas the secret is to want what you get at this moment whatever this moment presents you with always has already something inevitable unavoidable to it and that's called is any situation this moment is always as it is if you argue with it you're mad it already is but if you accept the isness what the Buddha I believe called suchness nice word it's such as it is always instead of creating these expectations of what this should do or should not be happening or isn't right you cooperate with the form that this moment takes you drop your expectation that it should be different you bring a yes to it the isness because you realize it's pointless to argue if it already is then a greater intelligence is available to you that is not available to you when you reject deny or don't want what is that cuts you off it is a denial it is a contraction of your entire being the yes opens you to life which is now a deeper intelligence and yes of course very often this moment may demand that I do something action may be required and action can come either from denial it can come out of the dislike of what is and that can be quite strong we have an entire civilization built upon dislike of the present moment trying to get to some future moment it's going to be better and this is the reason why progress so called progress is destroying the planet but it's progress we are finally it's going to be better and better when we've destroyed all the forests and contaminated all the oceans we will finally have completed our progress that's where we are going so action of course our civilization, the western world and part of the eastern world which is also the western world now they are all doing the same thing of course they are very active a lot of activity creating things everybody is running around like mad everybody is under stress and they feel guilty if they are not suffering from stress are they creating a happy civilization are they creating fulfillment, peace no it seems to me from what I observed that people are becoming more and more unhappy and stressed and they are all saying they don't have enough

time for anything, no time no time for the present moment certainly not for the present moment so we have an entire civilization that's extremely active that's creating a lot of things but there is a basic there is a flaw in almost everything they create almost not everything, almost everything the flaw can be seen on an internal level that all the people who participate in this enterprise are basically stressed and unhappy you can visit some big corporations, institutions government offices hospitals, schools these days, or universities and you will find everybody is stressed and they don't look very happy happy? more important things to do than that are they alive feel the aliveness the goodness of life no, goodness of life no time for that yes discontent with the present moment can generate a lot of activity but there is a flaw whatever is created through that activity has a basic flaw in it and that flaw expresses itself externally as the destructive aspect of our civilization the life threatening aspect of our civilization and internally as increasing unhappiness we can carry on like that we could perhaps another hundred years how much longer the planet can endure this kind of civilization we don't know more than a hundred years if there is no occurrence, probably not a change is now not just an option but a necessity for the first time it is true for humanity humanity has to change to survive that's why we are here and the change is inside you in consciousness so that you are no longer run by the egoic me that needs more and more and more and is going to devour the whole world and still not be fulfilled you can have action arising out of discontent that's our civilization you can also have action arising out of acceptance of what is which is a state of inner peace and aware presence you become aligned with the present moment internally aligned at one with the now you don't separate yourself from the form that this moment takes before you would have argued with it it's never enough, it's never right it's not the right kind of thing that should be happening but it is so you bring the yes to what is and this does not incapacitate you which means I accept what is therefore I'm never going to do anything again the Buddha we believe sat continuously like this according to the image but that's not the case he was continuously traveling teaching for many many years, he was active every moment ultimately of course there's only one moment and whatever form that this moment takes every moment may have a certain requirement some moments need you to act and if you are aligned with the moment the kind of action that you take is qualitatively totally different from the kind of action that you take when you deny dislike the present moment out of that feeling of I want to get somewhere better than this yeah it can make you do things but it is in eastern terms karmic action produces more suffering more unhappiness because it arises out of unhappiness we are going to fight for peace if it arises out of anger out of impatience communism was a beautiful experiment we are going to change the world, the mind saw the world is not just it should be no possessions no individual possessions, everybody is equal wonderful but nothing had changed they had forgotten about the egoic sense of self with it's need for more it's need to be right it's need for power and for enemies it's paranoia of others feeling threatened by others so it turned into a nightmare and it came out of anger too yes justifiable anger Russia was so unjust the political system was so unjust yes and the next one was even more

unjust turned out to be this is where the change happens and it happens it's almost invisible when it happens inside you it's almost imperceptible how does it happen?

stepping out of 100 200 thousand years of conditioning of the mind into the eternal timeless freshness and newness and aliveness of now that is not separate from who you are what is the now not the content that fills this moment with sense perceptions with experiences with thoughts and emotions not the content that fills this moment that's not the now that's what happens in the now the content the now is deeper the now is who you are as the space of conscious presence that makes it all possible that makes the whole world possible well, how do I know that? step out of thought into that still inner space it's not the right word because realize that you are in your essence not what happens in your life don't ever look for yourself in what happens or try to complete yourself through some event some happening, some place some situation, some person you are not you can never find yourself in what happens which is content you are not what happens you are the space in which it happens you are not your thoughts you are not your thoughts they come and go you are the vastness in which these thoughts appear and disappear because underneath all your thinking there is the stillness there is the pure being the pure consciousness the timeless dimension of yourself and at first when thinking stops for a moment there seems to be nothing there there is still a tendency of the mind to look for something so you become comfortable with that state of simple being alert present being you learn what it means to look without needing to call this flower, this plant, anything to simply look to simply perceive, as you sit here perceive this room perceive the words or let's just say the visual perception perceive this room, the speaker, the screen, the lights without needing to call it anything are you stupid?

have you become stupid in that state? the mind would say that because the mind would say yeah, but I don't know anything anymore now that's good but a deeper knowing comes out of that state wisdom can only come if you access no thought the dimension of no thought in yourself the only thing a wise person has that you don't have or that's the wrong way of putting it the wise woman, the wise man has nothing that you don't have he or she is simply aware of the dimension of stillness the dimension of no thought that's out of which all wisdom comes which is also in you so bringing that into everyday life through being aware of the inner energy field of the body being alert to sense perceptions another way of entering the state of alert thoughtless presence look around the room a few times a day where you are sitting in that room as if you had just been born into that room it requires a high degree of alertness yes, but that is in you so periodically even if it's only five seconds at a time you bring in thoughtlessness not in its usual usual thoughtlessness usually is a negative term but here thoughtlessness implies more consciousness more intense awakeness to awaken and it's not and then you realize the compulsion to think is just a habit deep seated habit and you don't listen to the mind when the mind says I have no time to be present now not even ten seconds not true

you're waiting at the elevator the lift, press the button are you projecting yourself mentally to where you want to get or are you really there are you immersed in thought or are you using that opportunity to simply be present with your entire being, standing there not waiting for anything because most people spend maybe 70% of their lives waiting for something there's always the next thing to do that hasn't quite been finished yet there's always the next thing to happen that I'm just waiting for this why not use all waiting periods for being present and then you step into the elevator and you press ground floor and it's going down and there is an aliveness in your entire energy field and it's beautiful, that moment has a fullness to it that is more than the externals that you perceive because after all there's only four walls around you and a light above you and some buttons so on the external level this moment has nothing to fulfill me but if you go deeper into that moment which is into yourself it's actually very fulfilling but you have to step out of that which takes you out of the moment learning what it means to be present and alert and then perhaps you arrive at the ground floor and you forget and you go about your business and ten minutes later you're in your car, the traffic light stopping, thinking, come on and suddenly you remember oh the now, this is the now and then again you look at the red light and the red has an intensity to it, it's quite beautiful that before to notice that you would have had to take acid because taking acid I'm not recommending this but for some people it can give them a first glimpse of what it means not to be burdened by continuous mental commentaries but it doesn't really raise your consciousness it simply amplifies sense perceptions and the red of the traffic light don't do it the red of the traffic light becomes so intense you can't think about it anymore it just is overwhelming wow so it gives you a little I took it once just to try it out because people told me people told me this is like acid isn't it and I always had to say I don't know I haven't taken it and finally I said ok I need to be able to answer these people so I'm going to try it once and so what I've experienced was the amplification everything was vibrating there was intensity of smell, hearing visual, tasting everything was amplified nothing special that I experienced otherwise but some people say wow the world can be so alive it always is you just don't know it because of the screen of your thinking so here this is much better than acid but there's a slight similarity, yes but here you notice it because you become more awake there's the traffic light and here I am and you feel the energy field in your body as you sit there and you become aware of the movement of people and you just look look the movement of cars you just look oh it's not that bad before you were complaining about that moment what's this, why am I sitting in this I should be there but I'm here yes can you argue with that? well you can but it's mad so you accept the is-ness of that moment and enter that moment more fully so nobody can tell me that they cannot bring that into their everyday life not continuously yet it's not required it is more important how often you become you awaken out of thinking than it is how long you remain in the state of not thinking that looks after itself, yes after a while that will be longer more important how often you step out of thinking becoming alert there's an intelligence there that wasn't there before and it doesn't need to call the world you know what you are looking at without concepts you

look deeply you also sense a certain aliveness in whatever you look at which is no different from the aliveness that is in you everything has being-ness to it everything has presence to it, even so called inanimate objects have a beautiful presence when you are not thinking about them, just looking so I'm not telling you now you must live in that state of consciousness just occasionally bring it in enter it five seconds is fine two seconds see the change in relationships as you are able to face another human being without the compulsive judgments and labels of the mind so you are there facing the other human being simply in alert presence perhaps you can feel your inner aliveness as you sit there look at the other person or listen to what he or she has to say and that is what happens now is sense perceptions are rising in a field of stillness that is you they are no longer being met by the mental screen when you need concepts of course they'll still be there you haven't forgotten when you look at a flower and don't label it as flower or don't say that would look good in my garden or that reminds me of a flower somebody once gave me or I'd like to open a flower business or whatever when you're just looking at a flower and there's no label then you see there is a mystery there that is more than a flower, you reduce reality to something absurdly small when you think that the label can encapsulate the reality of what is there, there is a mystery that is totally unknowable to the human mind and the mental concept reduces that mystery to something knowable but that's an illusion people think when they call, give names to things, they know what it is they know nothing, it's just a name, it's all pseudo knowledge daddy, how do the birds find their way thousands of miles to the other part of the planet how do they do that?

oh, that's instinct, oh thank you now I know so yes, we need the mind but to believe that it can give us access to the depths of reality the depths of life the depths of who we are who you are that's an illusion it's a little instrument beautiful, powerful in its own way but incapable of doing so many things useful for a small part of your life yes but there's so much more so much greater depths and it all starts with looking at something and simply be alert and present with it or a human being there's space in the relationship suddenly because you are in touch with the still space within just looking you all may remember, I may have mentioned in the talk two years ago those of you who were here the Zen master who would never explain the meaning of Zen when people asked him he became very famous all he would ever do to explain what Zen means which is quite mysterious to the human mind people spend twenty years trying to figure out what it means and can't figure it out why? because Zen is about no concepts, it's about no thought, it's about alertness awareness, so he would say what's the meaning of Zen can you explain please said the university professor and all the Zen master ever did was this this is it oh some people got it because there was such intensity there this oh, thank you others didn't get it did you hear my question they said I didn't hear your answer if you were faced with a life threatening emergency situation either you would become paralyzed by fear or it would push you into that state spontaneously, absolute alert, thoughtless, aware presence there is no fear in that there is no personal history in that,

there is no me in that, there is no thought what am I going to do next in that because there is no time just that and then you act and what you do may be something that you never thought you could have done but it just happened the mind stepped aside because in an absolute emergency it can't do anything because it hasn't got the time to think so some people spontaneously enter that state of presence when they are in an emergency situation and then usually then they fall back into their normal state but it can give them a taste or a glimpse so as you leave here you will be either walking somewhere or driving somewhere or on your bicycle present are you there as the carrier of your personal history plus your problematic future that you need to think about now or are you there as aware consciousness a field of conscious presence looking, perceiving the aliveness sensing the aliveness that is all around you even in stones the beingness the presence of everything and the aliveness that is in you the aliveness that is you the underlying presence there is always a choice you can be a walking story it's never a happy one for long don't let the movies fool you that end with a wedding it doesn't work like that the story isn't really happy for long unless you bring in presence then something that is even deeper than happiness is there and even the story of your life tends to improve when you access that deeper dimension even on the level of content which is you don't really need anymore because it's fine as it is then suddenly it improves the universe becomes helpful becomes cooperative life tends to become helpful in the other state the universe is threatening life is perceived as hostile what's going to happen next I don't dare not think about what's going to happen next to me what's going to happen to me I'm not a clairvoyant but I can predict what's going to happen to you you're going to walk around for a few more years and then you'll die me too and whatever you experience in those few more years cannot fulfill you it'll never be enough the only thing that can fulfill you is being yourself and that's inseparable from now the field of now that frees you it liberates you from the world and then you you walk around with much less heaviness for the next few years on the planet instead of at the moment humans are very heavy on the planet wherever they step life gets exterminated and that's to do with their state of consciousness but there is another way to live and this is it thank you

[Speaker 2] (7:12:19 - 7:13:21)

The Findhorn Foundation in the north of Scotland is a center of spiritual service in co-creation with nature which emphasizes education and community The Findhorn Foundation is at the heart of one of the best known intentional communities in the world and is a major international center of adult educational, personal and spiritual transformation about 14,000 visitors a year come to the foundation in one of the many ways that it is possible to visit, live and work there Eckhart Tolle gave a weekend retreat in the Universal Hall to a group of over 300 people this is a record of that event

[Speaker 1] (7:14:42 - 7:39:24)

Welcome to our weekend retreat at this beautiful, sacred place our theme for this

weekend is stillness which is inseparable from who you are in the depth of your being one could say everybody is still already the stillness is already there, it does not need to be found even certainly does not need to be created because it's already there the only thing is you may not notice it if there's a lot of mental noise then you just don't notice it that it's there and also you don't notice the dimension within yourself that is far deeper than the movement of thought and your whole identity is then bound up with the movement of thought a mind created sense of self a personal history and no more that is soon coming to an end soon next year or in 40 50 years time, it's soon soon so who you are and stillness are one and the same and if you have not yet gone completely mad in this mad world that means you have some access to the stillness inside you you may not remember it afterwards because it's not memorable since stillness is timeless and the mind cannot memorize it or think, oh that was interesting I'll remember that because stillness is not interesting interesting is a mental thing just as our weekend here is not going to be interesting you may have noticed that already but interesting is not the ultimate it's only the ultimate to the human mind you can go out here and look at a tree or flower or the sunset and could you say this sunset is interesting only if you were trying to write a PhD about sunsets if you had to analyze it or the oak tree the oak tree becomes interesting the moment you start to analyze it mentally and there is a place for that also in this dimension but if you get caught up on that dimension only where you break things up into little bits and pieces and analyze them and by the way most kinds of analysis you have to kill the thing first before you can analyze it or in the process of analysis it gets killed but if you just be with the oak tree contemplate it truly look then what you are looking at goes beyond interesting it's far deeper than interesting same as the sunset there is nothing interesting about it and yet it is awe inspiring it is deep there is a depth there that defies analysis by the mind the moment you analyze it you have reduced it to something lifeless and most people in our civilization and this has been going on for a long time are trapped in that dimension where compulsively they go about their life analyzing, interpreting and labeling things as soon as they enter their field of consciousness they do it to people they do it to situations that they encounter immediately have some personal reactive relationship to it they do it to nature and they can no longer perceive the sacredness that is there in nature because they approach it only through thinking thinking and that is a dreadful present that you then end up in the present of your own mind and then you approach your whole life only through that and your whole life becomes reduced to a conceptual reality in the head consisting of thoughts that you have about things viewpoints opinions and even so-called knowledge knowledge is thought a label and gives the illusion that you know all and all it is it's a thought that you have put on something and then it loses its depth and aliveness and you begin to relate to reality through the veil of thinking and you relate to yourself through the veil of thinking because you yourself become a conceptual thought-based entity an egoic self a me with its unfulfilled personal history its desires and fears and frustrations and its hopes that it will find ultimate fulfillment of its unfulfilled and unfulfilling sense of self based on a story in the future which again is a thought-form

that's what the future is nobody has ever encountered it except as a thought and yet most people live unconsciously as if the next moment or the one after that were more important than this moment the only thing there ever is this one moment that you could never escape from have never escaped from will never escape from that is inseparable from the life that you are also inseparable from stillness because the moment you enter the now with your attention a stillness arises the essence of the present moment no matter how mad it may appear on the surface is always stillness it is also sacredness the only place where the sacred dimension can be found is now you have to be present to this moment, you have to wake up into this moment to realize that life is sacred when you are lost in thought sacred is meaningless it could become another of the many concepts that you can play with and you could write a PhD about it without ever having encountered it yourself so this the depths of now is inseparable from your very being your very life and it is the sacred one life and yes this is why we are here to deepen our awareness of that dimension and it's the sacred is everywhere if you become truly present you would find the sacredness everywhere it's easier here in certain places that are called sacred there is less of a density in the structures the physical structures the forms there is a transparency almost to the forms, something shines through the forms and this is why we call those places sacred but even here there are some people who cannot sense that because they are not present enough when they walk in the garden they are still in their head thinking about where they are going the day after tomorrow and the accumulation of problems which are thought forms that are part of their sense of self I have important problems to think about and occasionally you get a glimpse three seconds of presence and you get a glimpse and immediately there comes the movement of thought again so some people cannot be present here most of you can and those who cannot I believe will quickly deepen and see how easy it is to be present and how hard it is not to be present normally people tell me the opposite they say it's so hard to be present and this is what the mind believes but the opposite is true not being present to the now is hard to live trapped in your mind is hard that makes living into something that is a struggle and an effort and you never get there you never make it because you live for the future which is only a thought form and this is another aspect of living trapped in thought with your whole sense of self trapped in thought hoping that at some point you will find yourself complete yourself or it's all going to work out in the end and in the way the mind imagines it it cannot work out because every form dies and every structure eventually dissolves again and the mind only thinks in terms of forms and structures and it hopes that life will work itself out on that level of structures and forms and it's always disappointed because it cannot and the miracle is it's already working out at this very moment it's already as it should be at this moment you have already arrived at the place of sacredness at this moment it's easier to see it here to sense that here more difficult to feel that this moment is sacred when you find yourself at Piccadilly Circus or Times Square and you need to be an enlightened being perhaps, which simply means very present to see the sacredness in the flashing Coca-Cola sign at Piccadilly Circus and you need to be a Buddha to see the sacredness in a prison camp and if one says the prison

camp also has the dimension of the sacred if one says that prematurely, this will be misunderstood and really will not make sense unless you know within yourself that that which is beyond form the one formless life is indestructible and some people who were in prison camps realized it for themselves so we are here to find that dimension that is deeper than thought within ourselves that has nothing to do with time and so people ask sometimes how do I still my mind?

I want to find a stillness and then, yes, there are some good meditation methods and eventually that also has to be left behind otherwise it comes in between who you are you put a method there to find yourself that is a space between you and yourself and every method eventually needs to be left behind you don't need it it's the last thing you leave behind and this particular teaching works without methods but if you have a method it's beautiful and you use it until you don't need it anymore every thought in your mind when you are not aware of it as a thought has a sense of self in it a sense of I am you identify with the movement of thought and that is the essence of unconscious living and that is why people continuously live for the future the thought form of future where they are hoping to complete their insufficient sense of self the happy ending of my story this is not to say you should not pursue certain activities learn new things explore new countries meet new people learn this and that, acquire knowledge expertise here and there develop your abilities physical or mental and create whatever you are called upon to create in this world it is beautiful to create in this world and on that level of course there is always more that you could do and as you grow older there are certain things that you can no longer do so gradually on the level of form your life becomes reduced, there are already many many things that is unlikely that I will be able to do I'm not going to win the title at Wimbledon anymore it would be a miracle if I managed to do that not totally impossible but I'm not even going to try it and many other things would say well it's just it's too late and this is true for many things it's too late on the level of form I need to accept yes no I'm not going to be the heavyweight boxing champion it's just too late for that or it never was possible so on the level of form yes depending on where you are in the in years there may still be many things that you can add to what you can do and what you know and what you explore or it may be that you're reaching the end of the lifespan of this form so there's little time left and there isn't that much more that you can add to yourself and that's fine too now the question is are you looking for yourself when you attempt to add more to who you are and that is the dilemma of human existence there is a compulsive searching for more not that there is anything wrong with doing new things no but there is a compulsive striving towards the next moment and the next and the next hoping to add more to who I think I am thought forms possessions attainments, recognition by other people, all thought forms, my, I have not enough yet, I don't feel secure enough, I only have five houses and three cars and I still don't feel secure and I think the houses are not big enough that must be the reason or they all they write about me in the papers and then okay by the way I don't have five houses it's just an example or to get recognition they all write about me and then I read in the

papers finally people have recognized who I am they think I'm great and that gives, temporarily gives you the feeling of I've now added that universal recognition to who I think I am and many people strive for that, they think when are they going to discover me when are they going to realize that I am special they may never realize it

[Speaker 3] (7:39:24 - 7:39:24)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (7:39:27 - 7:56:01)

there is a search for specialness in the mind made sense of self that in some cases is fulfilled and in most cases is not fulfilled on the level where it's seeking and so in either case that sense of specialness you could say there are two ways of being unhappy not getting what you want and getting what you want because all the people who have attained universal recognition in whatever field they are not happy either, they are not at peace with themselves they do not feel the sense of security and the sense of finally having arrived that before they had it, they had associated with that idea once people recognize me then I will have arrived and then the moment comes and at first it feels good and then you see that people's opinion of you are only thought forms they are images that they create or if they are very well known the media creates fiction that has your name and then you read about yourself in the paper and you see who is this they are writing about there is nothing to do with me at all and so many people become unhappy, even more unhappy when they attain recognition the world tells them yes you are special and yet I don't feel special or they see this is an illusion, that's not me it's an image, a mind created image and a few people then go beyond all the mind created sense of identity because they have attained what the world tells us is desirable wealth property, recognition attainment here or there and yet it has not provided them with what they were really looking for myself a sense of being rooted in life the fullness of life as Jesus calls it the fullness of life and so there are many famous people who take drugs and they need to dull the dreadful unhappiness they feel inside because even the illusion of more in the future that most people are still living by doesn't work anymore because if you already have everything the illusion that the more by attaining more in the future you are going to be happy can't work anymore for you what a dreadful fate you can't look to the more anymore to feel that you are yourself and so they feel even more unhappy, they cannot escape into the next moment anymore so they need to take some drugs so that for a little while I feel better or a few break through to a deeper level within themselves and realize that that sense of specialness that operated on the level of better than or more than was an illusion you can't pursue it and it will take you nowhere, it can never fulfill itself because it is a thought form me the special one that you wanted to incorporate into the story of me that is the basis of your identity as long as you are trapped only in thought me the special one some people have the fiction in their head that they are and I don't want to take away anybody's fiction if they still like it you could

have the fiction in your head that in a past lifetime you were Napoleon and that can give you a sense of specialness but it is derived from the movement of thought and images but that keeps some people going nobody might agree with you that you were Napoleon but at least temporarily it keeps you but you have to keep thinking about it and tell the story to others and others have other stories where other people say yeah that's true, that's who you are but it is based on the movement of thought and the emotions that go with those thoughts so you have a whole identity based on a personal history, very little and it's not going to last very long, the soap bubble of my personal history is going to pop soon and everybody can say I'm not predicting my imminent death, nobody knows but everybody's death is ultimately imminent because one year or fifty years it comes quite soon and it will be now when it comes not tomorrow and so to be trapped in that sense of self a conceptual reality that is a dreadful fate it's constant neediness which even gets translated into the spiritual once you have realized okay I'm done with possessions, I know that that's not it but be careful here with other thought forms that arise to replace for example you might have spent twenty years of your life making money and then you see okay I'm now giving away my BMW I'm going to buy a bicycle because I'm spiritual and I will only wear certain spiritual clothes or this or that, it doesn't matter what it is, I'm on my bicycle and then I can be on my bicycle and look at the person who is still so unconscious that he's driving his BMW and can think how much superior I am in my spiritual and of course what you're carrying now is a much heavier thought form than the BMW thought form so your sense of self has become have, can, it could, it's quite possible that the BMW man has less of a sense of self than the man on the bicycle it's possible, probably not but it's possible so be careful with any how the mind shifts and then chooses another story to feel, but always to feel, to make itself feel more than one way or another so that it can it works through comparison because it's thought, I think of I have an image of who I am and then I need to compare that to who I think other people are so I impose images of myself, mental concepts and images and then I impose them on others and then I compare my image with that image, hmm okay, I'm more spiritual than this or he's more spiritual he's been at it for much longer than me and then you get how much you know, knowledge is another one, you casually mention from your great store of knowledge, you casually mention a few things and the other person is dumbfounded doesn't know what you and it's obvious that you know more than he and that gives the feeling of ah, and so it works with little things to enhance it's always very precarious sense of self and then it loves being right and it loves others to be wrong because it's the only way you can be right it loves being right and feels itself enhanced momentarily through ah, I'm right so it's always the strengthening of the fiction of self, the fiction of me me and my story and that people go through life looking for that that's the purpose of their life is to strengthen the fiction of me ha ha ha and and so that becomes the motivating force behind their actions, what they do and it's always, it's an uneasy thing because very often you feel less than somebody else, then you have to kind of work around that less special than he he knows more but on the other hand I look better ha ha ha and then other people if they cannot achieve the specialness in the

way in which the world tells us you ought to be special, they achieve a reverse specialness by feeling unfairly treated by life by feeling that they are a victim of certain people or situations and in their thought form of being a victim they feel very special so you can still win even if you lose ha ha ha ha ha ha the mind is very clever and a victim identity can be very strong strongly lodged in some people's minds and as soon you meet them and after 5 minutes they will tell you their story you know what happened 25 years ago it happened ha ha ha and of course yes dreadful things did happen 25 years ago and they happen today also in this mad world but building an identity around some form of suffering that happened at some point or repeatedly in this mad world where suffering is inevitable to build a sense of specialness around that then you have put yourself into a dreadful prison with bars all around but at least you think you know who you are you have a story oh great at least I have a story my life treated me more unfairly than most people I'm I can feel more then and so whatever the mind it will find something to give itself an identity a conceptual identity and it is very much afraid of losing the story of abandoning it stepping beyond it and usually the story needs to become unpleasant for people to be pushed out of it because in a way the story is a dream the dream of who I am and if a dream becomes very unpleasant then you will want to wake up if no dream of me is ultimately all that pleasant but some are more unpleasant than others so see how the self the conceptual self continuously tries to survive, not only to survive and protect itself from others and to use others to enhance itself, use them in one way or another and that determines the relationship between humans when you haven't stepped beyond that there is wanting to use another human or needing feeling you need to protect yourself from another human being those are the two things that govern relationships in the egoic state you either use them or you fear them you need them and you are afraid of them and sometimes both at the same time and of course that also means there is no true relationship it gets distorted because you don't know who you are, you have only an image in the head that tries to make itself stronger because it doesn't feel enough yet I'm not enough yet and so for some people the sense of specialness is attained by frequent complaining in the head and out aloud about life and situations and people and what's going on and it really shouldn't be happening they should do something about it it's all very bad indeed why doesn't he and there is blaming continuously complaining and blaming and that the ego loves because it makes itself right by doing that.

When you complain about something or somebody you feel you are right and the person or the situation you complain about is wrong I'm not saying complain in a practical sense when you say I'd like to exchange this thing that I bought because it's not working that's fine, it's practical and you do something about it but the complaining that is the telling of stories in the head that has no practical purpose whatsoever that constantly is in a conflict relationship with the present moment there is always something about it that isn't right and so you complain or something has just happened and you complain or you complain because it hasn't happened yet so many people feel they cannot be

themselves or truly at peace with themselves because of something that happened or something that hasn't happened.

Those are the two reasons why you cannot be yourself either something has happened and that's preventing me from being myself truly or something hasn't happened yet and if that doesn't happen I can't be myself laughter laughter isn't that it's a strange thing, I need something to happen so that I can be myself

[Speaker 3] (7:56:04 - 7:56:05)

laughter laughter

[Speaker 1] (7:56:07 - 7:57:15)

laughter so we are not all the many ways we are talking about this here so that you can recognize it when it happens in you because it is a universal pattern in every human, it's inherited it is the collective human mind in its egoic unconscious state that operates in that way that keeps you trapped on the surface of your being on the little surface movement the wave movement of life the forms of life, all the things that happen and you are continuously trapped in that on the level of form just and of course on the level of form which includes even thought forms, they are primordial forms when you are identified with every thought that comes into your head laughter and of course there is never an end to it because the next thought comes immediately afterwards it's a string laughter and so it goes the whole day long it goes

[Speaker 3] (7:57:17 - 7:57:18)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (7:57:21 - 7:57:35)

and occasionally you get the little glimpses that keep you sane so that you can still survive here, you are not they keep you from committing suicide or they keep you from going totally insane, you have little moments of

[Speaker 3] (7:57:36 - 7:57:37)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (7:57:41 - 8:02:34)

and they may be short but they keep you alive there is a little bit of joy seeping through from the depths of your being through the layers, the heavy layers of mind there is a little bit, a little crack appears here and there, if it didn't you would be totally lost in here and you certainly wouldn't be sitting here laughter and so occasionally there is moments, it may be when there is sudden beauty and it's overwhelming or sudden a

moment of danger that wakes you up out of the continuous voice in the head laughter and suddenly there is more intense aliveness beingness, presence and then thought comes back laughter or it could be for some people danger in the form of a physical illness can come and suddenly that wakes you up oh and suddenly you realise all the things that you pursued and you thought were important are not important at all, so already something collapses on the level of thought, all the things that mattered so much and suddenly you develop a physical illness and see it doesn't matter at all and so that can be helpful for some, it can be an awakening for some people or it may be some people are kept sane by an animal because whenever, it's the only way they can relate to another being that is non-conceptual because when they meet humans they are trapped in the concepts that they have about every human they meet they impose mental concepts and images in the form of what they think about, they know exactly what they think about you they are not relating to you, they are relating to the thoughts in their head they have about you and most people do it to each other so you have only two thought made entities trying to be in a relationship each one both needing and fearing the other and this is of course why relationships are so problematic these days so some people are kept sane by an animal and the pets fulfill an incredible function that hasn't been fully acknowledged and recognized in this world, they keep humanity sane because there you have when you touch the dog or the cat or whatever it is and for a moment some people even there they carry ego but those are the extreme cases you touch the animal and you can be yourself you don't need to psychologically protect yourself from the animal or want something from you just can be with that and you can something transmits itself because the animal lives more deeply connected with the source of life than most humans less removed or one could say the illusion has not grown to such an extent of being a separate entity a me and the rest of the universe the animal still has the oneness with the totality hasn't lost it totally is deeply rooted in being so the animal does not create a world of problems the animal is one with life and humans have separated themselves from life they have a conceptual image this is me and there is the rest of the world there is a barrier and there is the other the other human being a dreadful concept, other and they are needing others and fearing others walking through life and other is mentally another concept so the egoic self the stronger you are trapped in the egoic sense of self the more you will emphasize the otherness of others and others will all become reduced to walking caricatures because the few labels that you have about them you reduce them and they are basically all caricatures and sometimes when people you listen to people they mention about somebody they met or somebody they know and see how stupid that person is and they have a few judgments and when you listen to that you see this caricature of this strange distorted human being and when you meet them you say this is the person we are talking about

[Speaker 3] (8:02:34 - 8:02:35)

yeah

[Speaker 1] (8:02:37 - 8:28:06)

and so the animal is not burdened by the continuous stream of thinking it does not have a conceptual identity like the humans so it hasn't separated itself so it can be an access point for some humans into being where they can be with a being without and it is for some humans it's a moment when they actually thought subsides when they pat their dog or you have a purring cat on your chest suddenly you think thought quietens becomes more quiet and you have a space of stillness and you feel the purring of a cat on your chest or simply to watch an animal if you can truly watch it can take you out of your mind and you become present because the animal is present and the same with the realm of nature the trees and the flowers and the blades of grass they are all present they are all surrendered to life, one with life a beautiful temporary expression of one life and so for some humans that's their only access point and for some even that doesn't work anymore I knew someone with a very strong ego who had ego battles with her cat if the cat didn't come she had the kitchen window open and the cat one evening didn't appear and she said where's my cat and then she would shut the window and said if she doesn't want to see me I don't want to see her and so the poor cat had to stay outside all night that also happens so there are cases where humans cannot even relate to animals anymore so this is where you and so we see millions and millions of humans living in a pseudo reality with a sense of self that is ultimately a fiction that is always insufficient, always feeling a sense of lack, always needing more always even needing to make enemies so that it can still define itself as me and the other needing some kind of conflict so that it's separate sense of self can remain intact what can I be in conflict with today what can I complain about now so that I can feel a little bit more myself ah there it is and so when millions of humans live like that then the result is what we read as human history a dreadful tale of incredible suffering that humans inflict on each other and other life forms on the planet incredible suffering and so the same you see on television when you switch on the news you will see just how mad the collective consciousness is of humanity in its present evolutionary stage and yet here we are here we are and we recognize that all that is a form of one could say collective mental illness that humanity is suffering from and so one could say well how can God allow a whole species to become mentally ill I heard that question somewhere in somebody's mind and of course you can ask the same question on a personal level how does God allow me to be ill how dare he, she, it to allow me to be ill, to suffer and of course within the larger whole everything has its place and everything is as it should including your personal illness for the moment doesn't mean healing cannot happen but there are many humans here who were brought here who would not be here if they had not suffered some kind of dysfunction in their lives physical illness perhaps or some great loss and so you can already see on your personal level that your suffering your physical suffering, whatever it may be to some extent began to dissolve the egoic structures in your mind it started to shake it loose so that something else could come through and you suddenly found yourself becoming interested in the present moment and then you end up here and no

matter what your story is and some of you may feel that it was all one big mistake the story of me was all one big mistake you are here now and that's an amazing thing to be to be here now and see that was the story and the outcome of all that big mistake was that now you are stepping out of it and you realize it as yes, on the level of form this is how my life unfolded and now let me speak personally for one moment I could easily look upon my whole life let's say until the world told me that I was important a few years ago it happened before that nobody told me I was important until that I could look at my whole life up to that point as one complete disaster nothing actually worked out I tried that for a few years and then I was at university and then I did my PhD and then I gave that up and then I drifted for two years and then I went into that and then I tried that and it didn't many things, ok, and then my mother said ok, now you're 45 what have you achieved? others have already built up big businesses and so on the level of story it was a big disaster and yet fortunately at some point already I had given up identification with the story the story was only my identity up to the age of 29 and it was a very unhappy one even there even when I was relatively successful the only worldly success I had was I did well at university up to before I became a graduate student and it made me happy for two weeks and so how isn't it strange that a failed story can produce the flower the flower of consciousness and perhaps the flower of consciousness needs the mud out of which it grows you have the beautiful image of the lotus in Buddhism, the symbol of Buddhism the lotus flower it grows, it has its roots in the mud and it grows out of that and there is nothing more beautiful in human life than a failed story and the good news is every story ultimately fails because the story is based on the forms it identifies with forms and no forms last for that long no building lasts for that long eventually it crumbles all forms are temporary and they are beautiful the essence that is hiding in each form is the formless one life that is indestructible but even this beautiful form it is not eternal as a form but the eternal shines through the forms here that is why, because the forms are transparent and you also are not eternal as this form and yet a transparency is happening in you even as you sit here so that that which is beyond form no matter what we call it, stillness presence beingness a deep sense of I am that before got mixed up with the story of me and that the preciousness of being is your true specialness what the egoic self had been looking for on the level of the story I want to be special that very thought obscured the fact that you already could not be more special than you are now but not special in the egoic sense that more than he or more than she special in the sense that there is a beauty and preciousness that is the essence of your being and that is what deep down you can sense, even the person who is most completely identified with their story and their conceptual sense of self they feel that somewhere there is something precious that is me but they confuse it with the forms, thought forms it gets that essence of being which is formless and timeless gets mixed up with form with thought and a story in the head and that is what the Buddha calls the fictitious self the self that the Buddha even 2600 years ago recognized as an illusion an enormous insight, the greatest perhaps the greatest insight of all humanity when he recognized the self is an illusion and by that he means the self that is identified with any

form thought form, physical form anything and that is the illusion to lose oneself in some form and then the preciousness of being that is the essence that is timeless and formless in every human and in every life form one could say incarnates in form and there's nothing wrong with incarnating in form as long as you know yourself as that which is beyond form but if you lose yourself in the incarnation and ultimately you had to do that too, that was part of the totality of how things work to lose oneself is as the Buddha called it suffering then you suffer because you don't know who you are anymore you're looking for yourself in some form in some thought form in some physical form that you identify with which is also a thought form me and so everybody is looking for the essence of their being not knowing that the specialness that they look for is already the essence of who they are but they can only find it when they stop looking for themselves in the future through more so the one place it's all like some strange game the one place where you truly can only find yourself in that one place most humans never look which is the present moment they look there for themselves and to feel I want to be more on the level of form you can temporarily be more, that's true and then that dissolves again but there is a level within yourself where more does not operate you do not need to be more, you are already a full expression of the one life you are already complete on the level of the timeless the essence of your being now the only reason why you needed time was you needed to be ready to hear this truth and recognize it as a truth for that one could say you need time to hear the message that to be who you are, you don't need time but the paradox is there are still many humans to whom this would be meaningless and they don't come here they need, in other words, they need more time they need to continue to look for themselves and they need to continue to be frustrated in their search that is part of the larger design the frustration is built into human existence and so that's what the world is for the so called world it is there to frustrate you laughter laughter and to drive you deeper to eventually drive you out of identification with form because as long as you are identified with form it is so frustrating and you can never make it, you can never arrange the forms and accumulate all the forms that you need you think you need to be yourself or sometimes you can do it for very brief time span you can suddenly find everything is now working in my life my health is good my relationship is great great money possessions, everybody loves me laughter they all write good things about me um it's all working, my job my living situation my finances, my health, my relationships they're all great but before long something there starts to crumble here and there, it's either the finances or it's the relationship or it's the living situation, it's in the nature of the world of form nothing stays fixed for very long and so it starts to crumble again here, you just sorted it all out laughter and so that's why humans, they experience life as a series of frustrations why can't it work laughter and it doesn't work because they are looking for themselves there they are demanding that the world of form should make them complete and happy, I demand that this world should complete who I am, should give me my sense of self I just need this and that from there and then that's all, this is what I demand and then it's not happening there's something wrong here life isn't working it seems to be working for everybody else but it's not working for me I read in

the magazines all these glossy people they, it's it seems to be working for them but only if you look at the glossy pictures if you visited them at home you would see that it's not working for them either so it's built into living here is frustration it's meant to be frustrating this is the larger the whole there is a purpose but people haven't seen it so it's quite a relief to recognize first of all the world cannot make me happy to demand that situations people, places or attainments should complete me or make me happy are bound to be frustrated whether I attain or do not attain okay so that looks very negative doesn't it and that's why when you don't go deeper when you only see the surface you see oh all is vanity as the Old Testament prophet said vanity of vanities all is vanity I've seen it all, I can't remember the exact words but I'm giving you a free translation I've seen it all I've done it all and it's all completely meaningless that's what he said and that was probably an elderly man who had tried it all and now why did they put this into the Bible isn't it very negative to have such a statement that life is completely vain, whatever you can achieve is vanity they put that in there because when you see the truth of it you're already becoming free of it the seeing of the inability of the world to make you happy the seeing of the short lived nature of whatever forms you encounter in your life what is it in you that is able to see that and say ah or even laugh what before was a dreadful story and frustration, you suddenly step out of your own story and see that your own frustrating story is not your personal dilemma but the human condition and you derived your sense of self from that which is nothing personal whatsoever it's the human condition and that it's the human condition in it's unconscious state it's unenlightened state and that's what gave you your sense of personal selfhood and that you wanted to cling to and now you step out of it by simply seeing it the seeing means something is arising that is not part of that unconsciousness and that is why they put it into the bible because when you see it that which can witness that in you the impermanent nature of all forms the fictitious nature of the mind made story what is it in you that is able to look at that and see that is not thought, that is the ability to be aware and hold up the mirror of awareness and simply see it there or let's say better the light of awareness shines on it the light of awareness shines on it and sees what before you were trapped in, the frustrating story of my life and there is no life that is not ultimately frustrating it only begins, it loses its frustration when you do not look to the world anymore for your satisfaction or for yourself when you give up demanding that people, places, situations should make you happy and give you fulfill you, you don't demand it anymore, then suddenly the ability arises to allow the forms of this moment to be as they are because life at this moment already always is as it is it always the isness you cannot doubt whatever forms appear in the present moment it always is as it is and so most humans are in a conflict relationship with the isness of life they internally run away from it or reject it criticize it complain about it or look somewhere else I don't want the isness of this, I want that so when you see what the world cannot do for you you no longer drop your demand because you see it as absurd to demand something of the world that it cannot deliver and then you can simply be with whatever is and is and this moment are always inseparable of course, whatever is at this moment is as it is I don't

demand that this place even if you come here and you demand that Fintan should make me happy, if you came with that demand you would probably already have experienced frustration here because no place is capable of doing that for long or doing it at all and so you come here and say oh that shouldn't be here there's a royal air force base right next to the spiritual center, it doesn't make sense and so you can complain about that that shouldn't be, why did they put that here they should have gone somewhere else and then you can say I came here to find peace and what do I find I find screaming jets I'm going home

[Speaker 3] (8:28:06 - 8:28:10)

and that's only one thing

[Speaker 1] (8:28:11 - 8:33:57)

and you'll find many more my roommate snores I can't get a night I have to wait for the bathroom and it's not sunny this is late May and it's not sunny, I should never have come to Scotland so if you just little examples of if you expect a place to fulfill you, it can't do that no place, even if you went to a South Pacific island there would be something that is not quite right, it doesn't fit there whatever it is the sunshine every day it's too much the mosquitoes at night they didn't, I didn't know about that they didn't mention them in the travel brochures so here again a beautiful opportunity to drop the demand that a particular place should make you happy or give you peace or help you find yourself and simply then bring a yes to whatever form this moment takes, instead of demanding that the form of this moment should be different in order to satisfy me so you bring an inner alignment into your relationship with the present moment let's put it like that the way in which you relate to life which is always now only now an inner alignment comes in with now so you do not internally separate yourself from now, which is life life and now are one because that is a source of great frustration and suffering and so whatever form this moment takes there's a jet flying it may be raining and then there's some sun coming through, good, bad the mind could call this good could call this bad, but it all is as it is at this moment and an enormous freedom comes into your life when you drop the demand that this should be other than it is and then you no longer demand that Fintan should make you happy or give you peace and then every moment or rather the one moment is as it is you go one step at a time to wherever you go and you look around and you stand and you walk and you sit and there are people coming, people going things here things there and suddenly as you bring an inner alignment to the now something arises within you that has nothing to do with the form that this moment takes and it arises because you allow the form that this moment takes to be as it is so in allowing the form that this moment takes internally embracing it, saying I might as well say yes because it is life because it is the only moment there ever is the now I might as well embrace it and say yes, that's how it is this does not diminish your ability to change if anything needs changing action arises out of the alignment with what is so you can be aligned with

getting something that is not good, you can have food that's gone cold and then you bring it back to the kitchen and you say, this food is cold, would you please heat it up again if it's possible nothing wrong with that but the action comes out of alignment the same action could arise out of an inner resistance to what is and then this immediately self comes in, a complaining self a self that enhances itself through its complaints and then walks the same action but with a fundamentally different energy field, you then walk with that plate to the kitchen and say what is this, don't you know, don't you heat your food here, what, you should be, this you should be serving you are in this your action is to enhance yourself through it, to make the self right to strengthen the fiction of me and then you do that to another human and that other human is going to defend itself and try to react in order to reduce the diminishment of their sense of self because that's what the ego tends to do, it says you are wrong it tries to diminish the fiction of that other person and then the other will defend itself and come up with even bigger cannons and start shouting back at you in order to defend its diminishment of, again, the diminishment of the fiction what a world laughter

[Speaker 3] (8:33:58 - 8:33:59)

so you could

[Speaker 1] (8:33:59 - 8:43:20)

live, when you live in alignment with what is intelligence arises in your life that is far greater than the accumulated knowledge of the mind or the ability of the mind to analyze or solve IQ problems or crossword puzzles that's a limit very tiny form of intelligence, nothing wrong with it but it's tiny but that's what this world calls intelligence you can memorize and analyze and be quick in giving answers manipulate thoughts and keep as many thoughts as possible in your head laughter and yet there's a far deeper intelligence that our civilization knows nothing of and it's that out of which all true creation comes, true creativity comes and so that is accessed when you bring a yes, no more than that a yes to the present moment that by the way includes the past because there are some people who carry a strong grievance or resentment connected with something that happened in the past somebody did it to you or a situation happened in the past and there's still a strong grievance that they carry and how does that work when I say accepting the present moment accepting the present moment the way it is now includes accepting the past because it is only because you believe that something that happened in the past is interfering somehow with your ability to be alive or to be yourself or to be fully yourself at this moment you're saying okay maybe you lost a limb or something like that, somebody cut it off ten years ago and you carry the grievance so how does when you accept this moment as it is you accept this as it is one limb is missing that is as it is, that is the form that this moment takes well and you accept that this is how it is then you don't have the reference to the past anymore as having caused that and on the level of form of course that is a disability it prevents you from winning

Wimbledon this year you can't do it anymore yes on the level of form perhaps that imposed some limitation on your life but the world is full of limitations that are inherent in form if it's not one set of limitations you will encounter some other set of limitations so there's almost never a present moment that does not have certain limitations even the noise coming occasionally from the air force base next door could be considered a kind of limitation or even if you can't get a good night's sleep because your roommate snores could be considered a relatively minor limitation in your life but there are large limitations and they are also to do with the world of form and that's what the world of form does you can exchange limitations you can of course improve your life on the level of form there's nothing wrong with that as long as you're not looking for yourself in it it's beautiful to play with forms in your life ok I'm going to make money now I'll play with that but not hoping that once you've made enough then you can finally be someone if you're not someone now, being you cannot find it through money or through future then you can play with the world of form and the miraculous thing is when you drop your demands towards the world of form it should make you happy then wherever you find yourself whatever situation you find yourself in whoever you meet wherever you go place situation, person is actually quite satisfying because you have touched something within yourself that is deeper than the movement of thought which is form deeper than form the movement of thought is still form so the simple thing of internally bringing a yes to this moment is that all?

yes but it needs for you to do that requires a certain degree of presence to be able to say this is as it is instead of being taken over by an old reactive pattern governed by the fictitious self that says this doesn't fit into the story of me or how can I fit this into my this isn't completing my story in fact this shouldn't be in my story at all, get out of here so many people they were walking stories often when they meet other humans they don't want to be with other humans say get out of my story you shouldn't be in here I want somebody else in here and again so you step beyond, you step out of the movement of thought and the stillness and the peace arises the moment you become friendly with what is, that's all become friendly with what is, no matter what form this is takes it's going to change anyway quite soon and people who are stuck for years are usually stuck because there is a resistance pattern inside them that keeps them stuck in the same situation and the resistance pattern says I want to get out of this dreadful place that I'm in and every day they go to the office and they say this is and the same energy is there, the negativity and the resistance and every time they answer the phone, yes laughter and so you get some people traditionally people at government offices carry a lot of frustration, I don't know if that's still true, probably is everywhere these days laughter and so you people are continuously, and they say why am I stuck in this boring job with all these dreadful people, they always want something from me and 25 years later they're still stuck and complaining and then they hear the message, it is possible to live differently, it is possible to say yes, not to not say yes to a story not say yes to okay I might as well accept that I've spent 25 years in this dreadful office and I'm

probably going to spend another 10 years in this dreadful office, I might as well say yes to that because I read that in a book somewhere laughter no, this has nothing to do with bringing a yes to some kind of story about your life or if you were in prison to say okay I might as well accept that everything has failed in my life and I've been in here for 20 years and I've got to do another 15 years and I might as well accept that I've been a miserable failure saying yes to the present moment only means the present moment, not a story it means it takes you out of the story and that is vital in your spiritual life now, as a spiritual practice it is as often as possible to break the continuity between past and future okay I'm coming from there and I'm going there I'm just busy trying to get there and getting this done, I'm on my way there, don't stop me now

[Speaker 3] (8:43:21 - 8:43:22)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (8:43:26 - 8:43:31)

and break okay but what about this moment where are you at this moment, this moment

[Speaker 3] (8:43:32 - 8:43:33)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (8:43:34 - 9:03:55)

oh and suddenly you wake up out of that stream of past future that was pulled you from past to future that is old conditioning, same old thing, same old thing no matter how much you complain, the more you complain, the more you're stuck and suddenly you take the present moment out of the story and you ah, you wake up and suddenly alertness comes for example you might hear the birds singing oh and you realise it's beautiful and you feel yourself breathing and you feel an aliveness in the body, every cell is alive the life that you are that which animates the body and as you feel that aliveness you're also aware that there's a stillness around you and in that stillness there's this incredibly beautiful sound that this little being produces which is a celebration of life every moment you've stepped out of the story into the aliveness of the present moment and yet you can still deal with things you may still be walking wherever you have to go and when you arrive there you're there and confront another human being you can still be present so there's more and more presence rather than time it's reversing whereas before you were dominated by time now you use time still but allow presence in which means break the story as often as you can step out into the aliveness of this moment and then a far greater intelligence comes in and love and joy, all the things that otherwise you can only think about but never experience all those suddenly come in and transform even the story not that the story is ever going to be continuously wonderful in the level of form forms always come and go but because you're not

dependent anymore on the forms of your life, the circumstances of your life, you have accessed the life that is beyond form that is you the stillness the aliveness the I am that is deeper than I am this or I am that and then all those all the beauty and aliveness and joy that is there in the moment even if the forms were crumbling it can be there you would be missing the whole thing because you would be drifting continuously adrift in the mind only and the bird you would not even hear it or hear it for a moment and say oh that's pretty and then okay my problems what are my problems whenever you think you have problems a good question is what is the problem now well well I'm trying to see my lawyer about this thing and there's a bank I'm going bankrupt and I'm seeing my lawyer about what is the problem now there's no problem I'm sitting here breathing beautiful bird sing bird song stillness space there's an aliveness that I feel inside every cell is alive there isn't really a problem now but there may be one tomorrow and of course when tomorrow comes you have to ask the same question what is the problem now as you sit in front of the lawyer and say sign here to declare your bankruptcy you say okay what is the problem now here's a piece of paper and here's a pen scratching on a piece of paper and then you put it down and you listen to the bird and see the tree and the flower and feel the aliveness within and say I'm still alive so you don't need the idea I am a bankrupt person to give you your sense of self anymore because your sense of self comes from the life that you are the aliveness of your very being and then yes on the level of form it happens that I had to declare bankruptcy I'm still breathing and the bird is still singing and a million people before me have survived that and this is just one example a more extreme example a friend of mine Byron Katie spiritual teacher was visiting a woman in hospital who had advanced cancer and she came into her room hospital room and the woman was of course very unhappy and she and Byron Katie said to her I don't see a problem and the woman got even more unhappy and she said you don't see a problem I'll show you a problem and she took off her blanket and showed her right leg was two or three times the size of her left leg this is a problem and Byron Katie said oh so your problem is that you think your right leg should be the same size as your left leg and in that moment the woman laughed for the first time in a long time she laughed because she dissociated from the thought form she stepped out of thought which judged this form as wrong which judged the present moment as wrong, should not be she was trapped in the thought form, this should not be invested with a sense of self and so the stepping out is vital for you the story has a momentum that will reassert itself again and again because that is the momentum of the mind and I'm not saying that you no longer deal with things in your daily life you deal with them much more effectively when you have access to the deeper dimension where true intelligence resides, that can then flow even into the way in which you deal with things on the level of form so even on the level of your story the story will unfold more harmoniously when you no longer demand that it should make you happy or do anything for you then you can truly honour this level of form because the neediness is gone because you are not looking to it anymore to give you a sense of who you are, because who you are comes out of the aliveness and depth of this moment and so to step out of the story and into this moment

as much as you can is vital, always ok, just a second, where is it now, especially when you get upset you lose yourself in some thought movement or you can help others if you have an agreement with your partner or friend and when you can see that they are not losing themselves in thought which almost certainly is going to be a world of problems it's not that they are solving problems by thinking they are creating problems by thinking to solve the true solutions always come when for a moment you step out of thinking and become truly intelligent by becoming still and present and alive and then if thought should come back often a little later you suddenly have a creative insight that before wasn't there and then it came because that dimension operated in your life and then it comes more and more and then everything changes your relationships change because you don't demand that the other person should do something for me enhance my sense of self you don't compare yourself to others and try to be more than another to strengthen your sense of self it's fine to allow everyone to be as they are and you don't need to change them to say you should behave differently and then I'll be happy if you behave differently you will make me happy but in the meantime I'm going to be very unhappy and I'm going to show you that I'm unhappy so that you behave differently and then finally make me happy and many relationships work like that the partners show each other they're very unhappy because they want to change in their behavior and of course by their unhappiness they strengthen the same pattern and so especially in this beautiful place here don't pollute the garden of Fintan and be a walking story here that is heavy your steps become heavy and where a walking story steps no grass grows and so humanity that is collectively how humanity is on the planet now a great heaviness has descended on the planet and that is the collective human mind with its accumulated enormous amount of negativity and dreadful delusion and that's the heaviness that weighs heavily on nature also and all life forms feel that pain so here step lightly don't carry don't carry the burden of personal selfhood around with you which is your past and your problematic future but be light as take one step at a time and be the presence through which you perceive be there with every step and when you perceive the tree the flower you are able to perceive against the background of stillness so you are not creating a barrier of concepts between nature and yourself a field of oneness arises between nature and yourself and then nature will be extremely helpful it's teaching you to be one with life to be still just go to any tree and see how still it is and the moment you notice how still and alive and surrendered to life the tree is that in you which notices that is the stillness otherwise you wouldn't even see that there's stillness there if you approach it only with thought you would have some kind of personal thing to do with nature oh that tree that would be great in my garden and don't feel guilty if that thought crossed your mind or even more the wanting to pick a flower don't do it here also why I must have that it's mine now even on that level the personal self can come in or it comes in oh that looks like a tree that my aunt Mary had ten years ago in her garden I wonder if it's still there oh she was a strange person wasn't she but to be truly present there as you're a field of aware presence walking and then it may happen that in addition to the beauty that you see around you and give walk sometimes and be with

give some attention to perhaps a tree or flower for a little while just be with it no wanting, nothing just being with it and then you may notice there's the form you may notice in the background the presence that you are the light of consciousness in which this tree appears the presence the stillness that you are as the background to whatever you perceive but trees flowers different noises in nature and so there's the that which appears, the form and that which is the space that enables this form to appear which is the space of yourself the space of now the space of consciousness the one consciousness the light of consciousness in which forms appear so that is and even here as you sit here you can sense that in the foreground there's this room, there's the voice the shapes and colours and yet what is it that makes all this possible to be to be the being, being itself before it becomes something that is the one life the one consciousness that you are underneath the form so you are in two dimensions one could say at the same time the formless space and form and this is your practice in nature nature is not challenging it doesn't, you can stay present easily with a tree or flower human beings are more challenging and so they pull you quickly into identification again with form with thought, reaction because most humans still come from thought they are thought entities and they want you to contribute to their universe and they say give me more thought confirm to me that my story is important and then you can tell me yours and I'll do the same for you laughter laughter laughter and in bed tonight as you lie there you may find the mind wanting to drag you along with it again and think about, okay there's only one more day or whatever it is, one more day or three more days or four more days left here and then I have to think about the things that are waiting for me when I get home let me think about my problems now laughter and then you suddenly remember ah, the now all there ever is this moment where is it of course you can't see it but sometimes it happens that you wake up your sense perception suddenly wake up

[Speaker 3] (9:03:55 - 9:03:56)

ah

[Speaker 1] (9:03:56 - 9:04:28)

and then you feel the aliveness in the body and you can lie on your bed feeling the aliveness within that permeates the body yes, this life is subtle but it's there and then the need to think lessens and you can just be a field of aware presence and perhaps you can listen to certain noises that you hear from nature and if it's your roommate snoring that's fine too, that's what is

[Speaker 3] (9:04:29 - 9:04:30)

and be

[Speaker 1] (9:04:30 - 9:04:50)

and if you have to remove yourself from that room that's fine or if you throw something at him or her you can do that too your ability to do things is not diminished when you live in surrender all it means, I surrender to what is I could try it, let's see if he wakes up if I throw something at him

[Speaker 3] (9:04:50 - 9:04:51)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (9:04:54 - 9:05:25)

okay still snoring laughter and you see that things that before would have created frustration and upset and anger and there's so many that happen in a person's life, all those things that before would have created that now are simply part of the is-ness of this moment and suddenly you have a space around it

[Speaker 3] (9:05:26 - 9:05:27)

okay

[Speaker 1] (9:05:28 - 9:26:07)

and that space is the space of presence and so you get to know yourself as the spaciousness around things so to speak not the thing you are that which allows the thing to be and then to disappear and then something else to come that's the now, that's the deeper meaning of now is the space in which everything happens and so the now and yourself are one and the power of now of course is the power of life of the very being that you are, and when I say yourself of course I don't mean the fictitious self of the story that is form based and thought based but the deeper being that you are being itself freedom from the world ultimately, and then the world becomes a very pleasant place not frustrating anymore things still come and go gain and loss happen birth and death continuously happen and that's how it is and there's an underlying peace and that peace is inseparable from who you are that's our practice this weekend and that's the way we can live our life which isn't really our life at all which is simply life living us life living through us we don't have a life because then there's me and life not possible, we are life the one life in many forms that are born and die continuously the one consciousness, the one life and so life can then live freely through you and it can flower and that flowering may take form also as a creation or it may remain simply as an emanation that comes through this form and that emanation one could call love not the egoic love that says I want you, you stay here I need you and I want you or it says make me happy sign here on the dotted line but the true love the love that is a recognition of oneness as an emanation that's the flowering I suggest you stay for a little while until you feel ready to move stay with the stillness that is here the sacred field the sacred space until it's time to move thank you the bird is teaching much better than I could I'm sure they got it

wrong when they say that Saint Francis was preaching to the birds of course he was listening to the birds they didn't understand such a divine sound and such a wonderful exquisite balance between stillness and sound that bird knows about balance there's always quite a long gap and then the next sound comes out of the stillness and it's always fresh and new it's never a repetition of the previous sound with this bird this is why it's so amazing and that would be enough if you have that around as your teacher what else do you need? the bird is teaching the balance between form and formless that's the art of living to live in both dimensions sound and stillness form and formless things and no thingness in this teaching the dimension of stillness of the formless is emphasized because the entire civilization is lost in form in things in objects in thoughts the entire civilization is lost in that dimension of things that includes thoughts and that's why there is a particular emphasis in this teaching on that which is missing balance needs to reestablish itself because no civilization can survive without the balance between form and formless now, everybody has form already more than enough that's why this teaching isn't based on knowledge or new facts interesting facts new information information and because the world is full of that you can push any button of the many devices that you have and you get information information and you're drowning in information and ultimately you see it's what is the point of it all if that's just more of that is that going to save the world more information or more things are we going to find the fullness of life through more things and greater and bigger shopping malls again form or are we going to find ourselves through improving our ability to think and analyze and solve problems analytically that were created by excessive thinking in the first place or as Carl Jung put it, you cannot solve a problem on the same level of consciousness that created the problem and so what created the problem of our civilization is that humans lost touch with the formless dimension which we could also call spirit which we could call the sacred which we could call if that word had not been misused so much, we could call God, but we won't call it that and Jesus said what does it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose yourself or your soul that's really you could already see the tendency where things were going and form also includes time so we cannot deny that time has or seems to be real on the surface of life, because it's everywhere, as far as forms are concerned time seems to do something to the forms, the life forms and it's strange it gradually grinds the forms down, it erodes the forms it does something to them, some people have even looked upon time as some dreadful illness that inflicts everybody and that's one way of looking at it everybody is suffering from a lethal disease the outcome is the end of the form it's just a question of when and so you see it as my father says who is 87 now he says mirrors are not the same quality they used to be laughter laughter laughter laughter laughter so the art is to live in this world where time seems on the one hand to be everywhere and control everything but where on the other hand time is also recognized as ultimately an illusion because if you look more deeply there is no time there is only ever this moment and therefore that is the portal into the formless dimension it's the narrow gate that Jesus talks about that leads to life the narrow gate that leads to life, yes it's very narrow it's only this to find it and

Jesus says there are not many who find it to find it you need to roll up the scroll of your life on which your story is written past future, very unclear you can't quite figure out what's it all about and you roll up people usually live carrying a burden some more than others but every carrying the burden of past me, my history and I'm hoping or fearing which way it's going hope, fear so you have this walking with myself that's the self the form based, mind based time based self and that has a heaviness to it and the more you carry of time, of past and future and think about it and talk about it and refer to as your sense of identity gives you your sense of self things that happened in the past and future, hoping to find yourself, we talked about it then you are lost lost in form, because all these are thought forms time and form go together so you need to roll up you know these old scrolls you had to roll them before there were books you had scrolls you rolled them there's a beautiful story of a vision that the woman who wrote or wrote The Cause in Miracles that came to her as an inner voice, before the whole dictation started she had a vision in which she found a scroll in an old box, a very ancient scroll, and as she started to unfold, unroll the scroll, she saw symbols on the left and other symbols on the right and she heard a voice saying if you read what's on the left, you know the past and if you read what is on the right, you'll know the future and she looked to the left and the right and then she rolled it back to the central panel on which was written God is and she said this is all that I'm interested in I don't want anything else that's all I want God is and then the same voice that had explained to her that is past and that is future said congratulations you made it this time so her focal point had become the present moment if her focal point had not become the present moment the spaciousness that was necessary for the wisdom to come through her, out of the formless it was then given form by her mind, but the spaciousness would not have been there if she had said okay, that's interesting let's see, I'm going to look at the future and then years later she would still be looking at the

[Speaker 2] (9:26:07 - 9:26:08)

oh wow

[Speaker 1] (9:26:10 - 9:32:25)

and the past is interesting too and God is the isness of now just that, and this is, you can use that as an image for your own life as much as possible be interested in this, and that is what we called getting out of the stream of the continuity between past and future as often as possible break that, make space as if you had a veil and you say this is the veil of my life in which things are written, this is a fabric and then you go in there and separate it and then you put your head through into another dimension the way you see it in some of these films of magic and that is the awakening into now and as we are all, we are transitional humans at this evolutionary stage of humanity many humans alive now are transitional beings they are dysfunctional as their manifestations of the old consciousness they are becoming more and more dysfunctional because the old

consciousness that is totally identified with mind, form and time that's been running human history for thousands of years is reaching the end of its life span it cannot survive much longer and so every human being carries the old also still inside and many humans and certainly those present here and many others are transitional beings in the sense that the old still has a momentum within them as the new is arising, I call it new because ultimately it's timeless, it's not new there's no time at all but let's say I saw the name of one second hand shop was called new to you so no words can really ever express the exact truth you have to be allow for the fact that language is never quite right and especially is never quite right when you begin to speak of spiritual truth the formless because every word is form and ultimately can only function by expressing reflecting something in the world of form and then it becomes difficult when the language is used to express something that is beyond form and that's why Jesus used parables and he never said this is the kingdom of heaven he said the kingdom of heaven is like or is a little bit like that or like that and he gives you little stories and then the form of the words as long as you don't get entangled in the words and say oh this is how it is if you allow the words to be pointers, little signposts then it can work but if you say there's the truth it's not the truth is not in the word and especially in spiritual discourse, the truth is that to which the word points so you have to look beyond the words especially here and so we learn to bring a balance into our lives between time and timelessness between the world of things, handling that situations things objects and not getting lost in things in the world of things in the world of situations in the world not losing yourself in the world and that world includes not only the external world but also the world that you carry as the mind made world in the head because that one creates that one the human made world the so called external human made world and the inner state of consciousness of course one continuum the inner the outer only reflects the inner and so on the outer level for example we have a civilization that is extraordinarily noisy if somebody came from some past civilization even 200 years back, thousand years back and would arrive here in a city or even in a small town they would say what is going on this deafening noise everywhere and the machines everywhere that make noise, have I arrived in the hell realm and if they don't have the noises that are produced by machines they have to make noise just for the sake of noise there's some good music but a lot of so called music that you hear in restaurants I don't know if it's the same here in North America hard to find a restaurant without loud music you just open the door and put your head in and you go out again

[Speaker 3] (9:32:26 - 9:32:27)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (9:32:31 - 9:45:15)

and a lot of that is for the sake of making noise it's called music laughter there are some exceptions of course, some music can have a divine function too in some rare cases it

still has music that comes out of the stillness that when you listen to music that came out of the stillness whoever created it or whoever is playing it or singing it it comes out of that state of consciousness and whatever then it assumes a form and yet the form is fresh and new it's come out of that and the stillness still clings to it has a fragrance it still emanates that even if it's sound and that's the beauty of all art true art it reflects still that state of consciousness out of it and then you have a lot of pseudo art in this world where clever minds are trying to be even more clever let's think of something new what can we do here maybe we could do that here or that could go there that would look clever they call it art but it lacks something it's totally trapped in form there's only manipulating old forms nothing new has come in and nothing that can lead you back to the formless which is the original reason for all art is the sacred to be a portal an access point for the sacred so that when you see it or experience it you experience yourself in it you see yourself reflected the formless reflected shining through the form that is why it's true art always there is more than what you see or hear it's not just what you see or hear there is more than that and that shines through the form and that is what can happen to you what is happening to you ultimately it's not everybody's purpose to create works of art a few humans do that that is their function partly in this world but much more importantly is for you to become that work of art your whole life and your very being becomes transparent so that the formless can shine through and that happens when you are no longer totally identified with the world of form and that happens when you have access to the realm of stillness within yourself and then something emanates through the form that is not nothing to do with the form it may emanate only as a silent emanation and not assume any form as such and so that is sometimes the case with so called there have been very few in the past holy people who simply in India they have always existed in any generation in India there have always been a few holy men or women who never did anything and that's very rare for the west they say what did they create what did they do and they never did anything they just sat there and the west says what a useless existence come on get a life, get a job and some even because people when you are trapped in form you misperceive it completely because all you see there is a useless form sitting and they say they are parasites on society they allow themselves to be fed by other people they bring them their food, they should work for a living like myself and that is when the mind that knows nothing but form, looks at the form it will totally misperceive it and so that's the beauty that in India they have always recognized that because they haven't completely lost touch in fact they may have gone at some point too far in the opposite direction so that they lost interest in form because they went into being more now India is becoming western the more you read about India the more you see they are all into computers these days and so forth and that's fine too but the question is where is finding a balance I was totally lost like most people completely lost in form and then a shift happened and I lost the balance and I became completely lost in the formless we can't really be lost in the formless it's just a way of putting it because the formless is essentially who you are and yet from a normal perspective it looked as if I had lost it because there was somebody who had this

promising career and suddenly just sits around on park benches not doing anything anymore just being and tasting continuously the sweetness of being of simply the beauty the sweetness of being alive the joy of simply being and then looking upon the world and seeing it reflected in all life forms reflected the joy of being in the trees and the birds and even in the humans who are running around like mad and knowing that deep down there there's also the very same being and it's beautiful so from an external perspective the ability to handle forms was gone to manipulate the world of form was gone for a while and then gradually had to reestablish itself so I could do again and of course be at the same time and that is the it is not the destiny of each one of you to move so deeply into being that you're no longer capable of handling the world of form around you it happens occasionally but it tends to happen more to those people those few who experience a dramatic shift from one to the other and then for a while they're gone there's of course the beautiful the beautiful sutra of Buddha gate gate gone gone gone to the farthest shore and yet it seems it is our destiny here while we are still in form to balance form and formless here and that's why we are here and for most of you the transition to a new and what is the new state of consciousness that's arising it is the state that is balanced the two dimensions the manifested and the unmanifested balanced in a human being and that is such a radical transformation that when a certain number of humans live in that way so they become what before was a work of art you become the work of art you become that which is transparent to the formless the divine and then that will change the entire world the way what you experience as the human made world will be changed completely it is not necessary to speculate now what is the world going to look like when enough humans live in the new consciousness that's not important now the important thing is for us to enter that new state and then what that does to your story who knows how that changes the story the way in which your life unfolds in time what you do out here how that affects where you live what you do and so on you cannot predict nor do you need to predict that are you going to become a great artist are you going to win Wimbledon and of course bear in mind that great artists and the tennis players they are not enlightened masters they have access to that which is greater than the limited human mind in the small field of their activity and most of them when they go back into normal life away from where they have mastery they are just as mad as everybody else and sometimes even more mad because sometimes the mind made entity gets in there and looks at what they did and says, I did that that was me the greatest illusion and then of course it feels very special, the ego then derives its it identifies with whatever came out of the state of no ego and says, I did that and then begins to believe what other people are saying about you and that you are the greatest because they all, they project their images of specialness onto you and then, oh the great pop star, whatever and the great pop stars also they have when they compose their songs or some of them where there is even a glimpse of aliveness and freshness yes, there's something there and then the personality the person comes back the moment they step back from the act of creation or the performance they step back and there's the old personality and sometimes it's a dreadful burden for some ability that comes from the non-personal

realm to be integrated into the personal and they just can't do it, it's totally misperceived, just as the world misperceives it and then they believe themselves to be very special